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OBSERVATIONS

ON SEVERAL PARTS OF THE COUNTIES OF
*CAMBRIDGE, NORFOLK, SUFFOLK,
AND ESSEX.*

ALSO ON SEVERAL PARTS OF
NORTH WALES;

RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO
PICTURESQUE BEAUTY,
IN
TWO TOURS,
THE FORMER MADE IN THE YEAR 1769.
THE LATTER IN THE YEAR 1773.

By WILLIAM GILPIN, A. M.
PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY; AND VICAR OF BOLDRE IN
NEW-FOREST, NEAR LYMINGTON.

PUBLISHED BY HIS TRUSTEES
FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS SCHOOL AT BOLDRE.

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OBSERVATIONS,
ON SEVERAL PARTS OF THE COUNTIES OF
CAMBRIDGE, NORFOLK, SUFFOLK,
AND ESSEX;

RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO
PICTURESQUE BEAUTY;

MADE IN THE YEAR 1769.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
A CRITICISM ON *LORD ORFORD'S PICTURES*
AT HOUGHTON-HALL.



OBSERVATIONS

ON

CAMBRIDGE, NORFOLK, &c.

SECTION I.

THE following remarks were the result of a hasty tour through Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk. The principal view indeed of this journey, was to examine Lord Orford's pictures at Houghton-hall; which I mention as an apology for dwelling so long on so disproportioned a part.

The Essex road, as we leave London, makes a short turn from Clapton to Lea-bridge; beyond which it crosses the meadows in a direct line, and cuts at right angles a woody horizon, consisting of a distant view of Epping-forest. The meadows are flat, and the Lea, of

B

course,

course, is sluggish. Little beauty can result either from one, or the other.

From hence the road leads into close lanes; and the country continuing flat, seldom opens into a distance. Wherever an opening presents itself, it is crowded with buildings, which are the fatiguing objects in every part of the environs of London. So great a number of them, instead of adorning landscape, distract the eye, and destroy all idea of unity. One object, or two, in a view, is sufficient; but not such as we meet with here.

Epping-forest is in many parts little better than a barren heath. About Snarebrook we found it wild, woody, and picturesque.

Lord Tilney's at Wansted, built by Colin Campbell, perhaps of all the great houses in England, answers best the united purposes of grandeur, and convenience. The plan is simple, but magnificent. The front extends two hundred, and sixty feet. A hall, and a saloon occupy the body of the house, forming the center of each front. From these run a double

row of chambers. Nothing can exceed their convenience. They communicate in one grand suite; and yet each, by the addition of a back stair, becomes a separate apartment. — It is difficult to say, whether we are better pleased with the grandeur and elegance without; or with the simplicity, and contrivance within.

The chambers are furnished to profusion with velvets, embroidery, and tapestry: but there are no pictures worth looking at; and yet there is the affectation of a large collection. Some indifferent hand has produced a great variety of copies from Rembrandt, Guido, and other masters; but they are of little value. Here also are several of Panini's crowded ruins; and in the hall, and eating-parlour, many histories by Cassali. Coriolanus is a tolerable picture: but, in general, they consist of bad figures, injudicious grouping, and gawdy colouring. In the ball-room is a good *Portia* by Skalken.

It is not easy to avoid such an opportunity of remarking the absurdity of adorning a noble house with tawdry pictures. The genuine works of capital masters, however indifferent, have a kind of classical authority stamped upon them; and if they displease one connoisseur, may

please another. Parts in all of them we may admire; and if there is nothing else to please, we may be amused with examining the mode of execution in each. Pictures also, by inferior masters, are often excellent; and may adorn a great house with propriety. We should wish them however to be original. But paltry painting, whether original or copied, like paltry poetry, is disgusting. Horace's rule is admirable in *all matters of taste*.

Ut gratas inter menfas symphonia difcors,
 Et craffum unguentum, & Sardo cum melle papaver
 Offendunt; poterat duci quia cœna fine iftis:
 Sic animis natum, inventumque poema juvandis,
 Si paulum fummo difceffit, vergit ad imum.

There are some things (as I should tranſlate this paſſage) which are abſolutely neceſſary; and which therefore we *muſt* have; and there are other things which are merely ornamental; and which we *need not* have. In the former, we diſpenſe with perfection: but in the latter, we muſt either have perfection or ſomething very like it: becauſe the end of ornament is to *pleaſe*; and if it fail in this, it does nothing. A man *muſt* have a dinner, for inſtance, and tho homely, his appetite gives it a reliſh. But when a man proceeds to treat his company at dinner
 with

with a band of mufick, unlefs it be good, he had better omit it. Thus a man *muft* have a houfe; and tho his houfe be not in elegant taſte; yet ſtill it is a valuable accommodation. But if he proceed to ornament his houfe; unlefs his ornaments are elegant, his houfe is better without them;

— poterat duci quia cœna ſine iſtis.

We may add, that paltry copies from great maſters take from the dignity of a noble manſion. If the anceſtry of ſuch a houſe had been many years in the poſſeſſion of it, it may be ſuppoſed they might have collected a few original pictures. If nothing of that kind is found in it, the poſſeſſors of the houſe may be ſuppoſed to be an upſtart race.



S E C T. II.

FROM Lord Tilney's we proceeded, through the forest, to Woodford ; in the neighbourhood of which are some pleasant views on the right. Ranges of villages succeed : but no idea of forest-scenery. Here and there are little patches of common, circled with wood ; and a variety of villas, shewing more the opulence, than the taste of their owners. Sometimes the half-formed idea of a forest-scene breaks out : but the trees are seldom massed — often only solitary pollards.

At the *Bald-faced stag*, about the tenth stop a descending plain, marked with many tracks, and closed with a woody scē agreeably. A nother scēne of the same

was afterwards employed in forming the remainder into a whole ; in which he was thought to have shewn but little judgment.——Audley-end however, tho the improved grounds around it did not appear to us very interesting, is still among the places pointed out, as worth seeing on this road.

The country beyond Audley-end grows chalky, bare, exposed, ridgy, and unpleasant; and, after we leave Chesterford, it becomes flat also. The distances, such as they are (no where furnished with variety of objects, nor ever remote) are terminated with one even line of horizon: and the foregrounds are spungy swamps, producing only rushes, the natural appendages of a fenny country. Gog-magog-hills, which we leave on the right, so little deserve the name of *bills*, that we should not have observed them, unless they had been pointed out to us.

Cambridge makes no appearance at a distance. King's-college chappel, is the only object, which presents itself with any dignity, as we approach.

At the end of Queen's walk, Clare-hall makes a good *perspective*. When you see it





in front, as you do from Clare-hall-piece, it loses half its grandeur. In full view, you are sure you see the *whole*: whereas a perspective view leaves the imagination room to *extend* the idea.

King's-college chappel gives us on the *outside*, a very beautiful form: *within*, tho it is an immense, and noble aisle, presenting the adjunct idea of lightness, and solemnity; yet its disproportion disgusts. Such height, and such length, united by such straitened parallels, hurt the eye. You feel immured. Henry the Sixth, we are told, spent twelve hundred pounds in adorning the roof. It is a pity he had not spent it in widening the walls. We should then have had a better form, and should have been relieved from the tedious repetition of roses and portcullisses; which are at best but heavy, and unpleasing ornaments.

Trinity-library is a well proportioned room. In the anti-chappel, the statue of Newton is a master-piece. The character is rather boyish: but the attitude, the expression, the management of the drapery, and indeed the *whole*, and every *part*, are excellent. — A fine statue I have often thought one of the greatest efforts of human art. After the *idea is conceived*, the
model

model is made; which is the great work of genius. As the model answers in statuary to the sketch in painting, it has much of its virtue; and is often more spirited and beautiful, than the statue itself. We however, who cannot have seen the models of the Apollo, or the Laocoon, must be content with the statues: and may remain the more satisfied, as we can conceive nothing in statuary higher. — But still, though the model is the grand effort of genius, the mechanical part appears to be attended with great difficulty. Marble, and bronze, are such untractable materials, that it is wonderful to see them brought to assume, in any degree, the softness of flesh, or the pliant folds of drapery. For myself, therefore, I cannot but look with more commiseration at a wretched statue, than at a bad picture. Some of the chief difficulties of the sculptor are unknown to the painter. The painter has only one surface to manage; one position to secure; and the ductile materials of oil and colour to work with. Michael Angelo was equally skilled in painting, and in statuary; and, we are told, divided his time between them: but for one figure, which he produced in sculpture, he probably painted fifty pictures.

Under

•Under the benign influence of such remarks, we forbore to criticize four very indifferent statues, which presented themselves in the Senate-house. The duke of Somers's is the best; but it has only a low degree of comparison, in its favour. — The Senate-house is a heavy building; and the gallery makes it heavier.

The public-library, however richly stored with books, is not an object to be shewn. Nor are the public-schools any ornament to the university.

of the river: in dry summers this is in part effected naturally. But in so flat a surface the water commonly lies long; and in many parts stretches as far as the eye can reach; the road running through it, like a lengthened mole, in perspective. The whole scene resembles that melancholy one described by Tacitus, in which a great part of the army of Germanicus was lost. “*Angustus trames, vastas inter paludes, quondam a L. Domitio aggeratus. Cætera limosa, tenacia gravi cœno, aut rivis incertis erant.*”

A fen differs from a lake in these particulars. — A lake is the produce of a mountainous country, formed commonly by a rapid river, which carries off the superfluous waters in the continuance of the same stream, that introduced them. — A fen, on the contrary, is generated on a flat by land-springs, or the exuberance of rain-waters; which, having no natural discharge, but by exhalation or through the pores of the earth, stagnate, and putrify upon the surface.

The lake has commonly a beautiful line, formed by the undulation of the rocks, and rising grounds along it's banks. — The fen unites in rushy plashes, with the swampy soil,
on



on which it borders. Here and there, as the waters subside, the eye traces a line of decaying sedge, and other offensive filth, which is left behind.

Instead of the rocks, and woods, which so beautifully adorn the lake, the fen presents at best only pollard-willows, defouled with slime, and oozy refuse hanging from their branches; standing in lines, and marking the hedge-rows, which appear by degrees, as the waters retire.

Again, the lake is a resplendent mirror, reflecting trees, and rocks from it's *margin*; and the cope of heaven from it's *bosom*; all glowing in the vivid tints of nature. — The fen, spread with vegetable corruption, or crawling with animal generation, forms a surface, without depth, or fluidity; and is so far from reflecting an image, that, it hardly comes within the definition of a fluid.

Lastly, the lake is generally adorned with light skiffs, skimming, with white sails, along it's banks; or with fishing-boats, drawing their circular nets; or groups of cattle laving their sides near the shore. — The fen has no chearful inhabitants. Here and there may be seen a miserable cow, or horse, (which in quest of a mouthful of better herbage, had ventured too

far) dragging its legs, besmeared with slime ; and endeavouring with painful operation to get some stable footing.

Through this uncomfortable country we travelled between Cambridge and Ely. It is such a country as a man would wish to see once for curiosity ; but would never desire to visit a second time. One view sufficiently imprints the idea. Indeed where there is but one idea, there can arise no confusion in the recollection.

As we approached Ely, the country assumed a better face. The ground rose out of the fens, from whence this little district assumes the name of the Isle of Ely : a degree of cultivation appeared ; and here and there a few trees gave some life to the scene.

Ely cathedral is a noble object at a distance : and on the spot we found it a beautiful sample of the various modes, and improvements of Saxon architecture — very inferior indeed to pure Gothic ; yet much beyond that mixed style, of which many cathedrals are composed. In point of mere magnificence, it equals any thing, I believe, in the kingdom.

On entering the nave at the great gate, we have an effect in architecture, which is always
pleasing



pleasing in painting — that of a *graduating light*. It was not, I suppose, for the purpose of producing this effect, that the windows at the entrance are gloomy. The gloom however is solemn; and among so many arches, and pillars exceedingly grand. As you walk up the nave, the light begins more and more to steal in upon you; till you arrive near the transept, where it sheds all its lustre from a magnificent lantern-dome placed above it. — We meet with this *graduating effect* of light sometimes in nature: but I have not often met with it in architecture. — We regretted however, that we saw this noble fabric in much confusion: the chapter were altering the choir; and the ground being lowered, coffins, and monuments, and heaps of earth, and engines, and broken pews, and rails, and scaffolding were all so mingled together, that it was impossible to judge, either of its present or of its intended effect.

Contiguous to the cathedral is a piece of architecture, purely Gothic, which goes by the name of the *parish-church*. The internal proportions, and harmony of this building pleased us much. It is in miserable plight; and some of the windows are even blocked up:

but if it were repaired, and *elegantly* beautified, it would perhaps be one of the most pleasing rooms of the kind in England. We were informed at Ely, by our conductor that King's-college chapel in Cambridge was modelled from this structure. If it was, the architect has strangely mistaken the proportions. King's-college chapel is in length two hundred and ninety one feet; but being divided in the middle by a skreen, the length of each part is one hundred and forty five feet. In breadth it is forty five, and in height seventy eight. The chapel at Ely is in length one hundred feet, in breadth forty six, and in height sixty. The first proportion is certainly a bad one; the latter, highly beautiful.

S E C T. IV.

THE isle of Ely was formerly the site of a monastery; and was more than once, from the difficulty of access to it, considered as a fortress. The most memorable siege it underwent, was conducted by William the conqueror; and it is worth a short detail, were it only to shew the nature of the country, of which it gives a stronger impression, than any description can do. This siege is cursorily mentioned by Rapin; but Bentham, in his Antiquities of Ely, has collected the best detail of it: from whom I have extracted the few following particulars.

Thurston was then the abbot. He, and his monks having received great favours from Harold, espoused the part of Edgar Etheling; and their inclinations being known, many of the discontented barons, at a time when

the Normans were held in common detestation, retired with their adherents to the isle of Ely, as to an asylum. Among these were the potent earls of Chester and Northumberland. This conflux obtaining by degrees the appearance of a garrison, the chiefs of it came to a resolution to fortify the isle against William; and chose Hereward, lord of Brune in Lincolnshire, to be their commander. Hereward having been banished in a late reign, had spent his youth abroad as a soldier of fortune. His father dying soon after the battle of Hastings, he came home with a hope of accommodating his affairs, as he had given no offence to William. But finding his lands bestowed on a Norman, he got together a few of his old tenants, and in the first excesses of his rage, took forcible possession. This action, drawing on him the resentment of William, he joined the malcontents in the isle of Ely, where he was considered as a great acquisition.

In the beginning of the year 1069, William drew his forces towards the fens, against the garrison of Ely, which grew daily more formidable. Having secured all the passes, on the east, which led into Suffolk, he began

a prodigious mole on the west, which he carried two miles into the water, forming it on piles, and lining it with bags of earth. His intention was to join it to the isle, as the best means of access to the town. He had almost compleated his works, when Hereward falling out, drove him from them, — attacked his mole; and in a few hours destroyed the operations of a summer.

Early the next year however, William returned; and having been unsuccessful in his last attempt on the western side, he endeavoured to secure a more favourable passage over the fens on the east, where a neck of land running out, would assist his labour. But tho he gained an advantage in one point, he lost it in another. The passage was short; but the waters were dangerous. The tide often, on this side, forces it's way up the Ouse, and other rivers of the fens, in an extraordinary manner; and the floods occasioned by this influx, of which William was not aware, destroyed his works.

The year however was not yet far advanced. He called a council therefore at Brandon, in which it was determined to make a new attempt, where he had made one at

first. With great dispatch he got together magazines, and materials, and laid the foundation of a new mole. — In the mean time Hereward, wishing to check his operations, before he had proceeded the length he had done before, entered his camp in the habit of a fisherman; and having obtained the intelligence he wanted, made a sally in his boats (probably by night) burnt the Norman forts, and magazines, and rendered all farther attempts this year, impracticable.

The siege however having now continued two years, the monks, at whose expence it was chiefly carried on, began to be heartily tired of it. Their larders were devoured — their cellars were exhausted — their pastures depopulated; and their corn-ricks consumed. They could not have received more injury from the enemy himself. They were neglected also, as well as plundered. When the abbey-bell rang for dinner, instead of sitting down in their own hall to a quiet meal, they were considered rather as intruders. Every chief took his seat at table under his own arms, which hanging against the wall, denoted his place. The poor monks got what they could. Tired therefore of this expence, and neglect,

neglect, some writers say, they found means, in the third year of the siege, to introduce the king's troops. Others say, that William made a new mole, and being more fortunate, took the place by assault. That the monks were dissatisfied with their military associates, is beyond a doubt. But they seem to have been patient sufferers: for when William, in the year 1071, took the place, it appears, that the monastery fell as much under his displeasure, as the garrison.



S E C T. V.

FROM Ely we proposed to cross the country by Lynn to Houghton : but being informed, that the fens beyond Ely were impassable, we had no inclination to make the trial ; having seen enough of the fens already to have no desire to see them in a still more inhospitable state. We altered our course therefore, and took our route by Mildon-hall.

The road, through five or six miles, is a good turnpike, raised over swampy grounds, cut every where across with drains, and ditches, as we found them in our approach to Ely. Rows of pollards with slime hanging from their branches, marked the limits of hedges, which emerged, as the waters drained off. In the mean time a circumscribed horizon of fenny surface was our only distance.

If

If it had been remote, it might have lost in obscurity its disgusting form. But its disagreeable features were apparent to the utmost verge of its extent.

We soon however found, that we were in the neighbourhood of a country still more disagreeable, at least for travelling, than a fenny one. This was a vast tract of sand. At Soham, which is a considerable village, we *landed*, if I may so speak, from the fens; and hoped we had now gotten upon stable ground. But we soon found our mistake. We had scarce left it, when we entered upon the sands; and only changed the colour of our landscape; both of them being equally wild, open, and dreary. Not a tree was to be seen. The line of the horizon was scarcely broken with a single bush. The wildness was in some degree lessened by a few patch-faced sheep, and a few straggling cattle grazing in the greener parts. — But this little appearance of herbage soon went off. In a few miles the country became an absolute desert. Nothing was to be seen on either side, but sand, and scattered gravel, without the
least

least vegetation ; a mere African desert : ager arenosus, unâ specie æqualis, nudus gignentium*. In some places this sandy waste occupied the whole scope of the eye : in other places, at a distance, we could see a skirting of green, with a few straggling bushes, which being surrounded by sand, appeared like a stretch of low land, shooting into the sea. The whole country indeed had the appearance of a beaten sea-coast ; but without the beauties, which adorn that species of landscape. In many places we saw the sand even driven into ridges ; and the road totally covered ; which indeed was every where so deep, and heavy, that four horses, which we were obliged to take, could scarce in the slowest pace, drag us through it. It was a little surprizing to find such a piece of *absolute desert* almost in the heart of England. To us it was a novel idea. We had not even heard of it.

In some parts of the northern coast of Scotland, dry, floating sands are very dangerous, often covering lands and houses. I have

* Sallust. Bell. Jugurth.

somewhere

somewhere met with an account, (tho I cannot readily quote my authority), that these Scotch sands were once fixed by a sort of matted-grass, which cattle will not eat; but the country people destroying the grass for fuel, an act of parliament passed in the reign of George II., to protect it. — It has been recommended, I have also heard, to the Norfolk gentlemen, to sow this grass, as a mean to fix these sands.

By degrees the country acquires a better surface. Breaks of herbage begin, here and there, to arise; but it is dry, and meagre, something between grass, and rushes, thinly scattered over plots of sand. No animals are seen, except a few rabbits, which are the only inhabitants it can provide for.

At Brandon (called by the country people Bran) we crossed the Ouse into Norfolk. Our road at first led through an intermixture of sand, and down; here and there varied with a few trees; but, on the whole, very unpleasing, and unpicturesque. A little before we reach Swaffham, we get into lanes.

A few

A few miles on the north of Brandon, lies a small peninsula called Helgay-fen, consisting of about one thousand acres. Periodically, in six or seven years, this little district, we were informed, is visited by an innumerable host of field-mice; which begin a very destructive depredation: but precisely, at the same time, a flight of owls arrive from Norway, (of the large, white species, called the horned-owl), as if drawn by instinct. The owls immediately attack the invaders, and live deliciously, till they have entirely destroyed them. In the mean time they are revered by the peasants, as the Dutch revere storks. When the mice are all devoured, the owls return quietly home. I dare not venture to vouch the truth of this strange story; as we were informed of it too late to examine the particulars on the spot: but I believe there is at least some foundation for it*.

Similar accounts we sometimes meet with. Not long ago, a swarm of locusts appeared in such multitudes about Athens, that the people

* See an account of this fact in the *Gent. Mag.* vol. xxii.
were

were greatly alarmed for their crops of corn. But unexpectedly a flight of storks visited the country, at the same time, and very soon dispatched the invaders.

Swaffham is a neat, elegant town. The streets are open ; and well-built. The church is handsome, and stands pleasantly. — Every thing indeed, about the town, was in such exactness, and order, that the whole seemed as if it were under the direction of a single person.









S E C T. VI.

FROM Swaffham the road still continued sandy ; sometimes running through furzy-commons, and sheep-walks, which are every where inhabited by numerous flocks.

Near Newton we leave, on the left, the ruins of Castle-acre, once the mansion of the great earl Warren ; and able still to impress the idea of it's ancient splendor. The ruin of the citadel only now remains. It makes a kind of ragged appearance (for it's form, in a good degree is lost) on a rising ground, containing about an acre. But the whole site of the castle, and it's dependencies, are said to have covered eighteen acres ; which shews the immense power of the chief, who distributed such of his vassals, as were his

D

usual

usual guard, in so wide a circumference around him.

A little beyond Lexham the road passes through a valley, with a rising carpet-lawn on each side. The view is singular, and pleasing. The open country points afterwards into lanes; which grow more pleasant as we approach Raynham.

We saw nothing striking in the situation, or house at Raynham. Our errand indeed was chiefly to see Salvator's Bellisarius; which was presented by the late king of Prussia, to the grandfather of the present lord Townshend. It is a very noble picture, of which the print gives but an inadequate idea. The unfortunate chief, stands resting against a wall. He occupies almost the whole piece; leaving room only for two or three soldiers, who make a distant group. The story, tho told in this simple manner, can hardly be mistaken. A blind figure, squalid, tho dressed in rich armour — discovering great dignity of character, both in his own appearance

appearance, and from the distant respect shewn him by the spectators — leads the memory easily to recollect Bellisarius. — The *composition* is as pleasing as the *design*. All the objects of the piece are so contrived, as to form a good *whole*. — The *harmony of the colouring* too is excellent. An agreeable sober tint runs through the picture. Scarce a touch is out of tune. If any, it is a streak of light in the sky, on the left. Bellisarius's drapery is rich in the highest degree; and yet harmonious. His mantle is yellow: his sash of a white, silvery hue; and his armour, steel. — The light also is well disposed. In *expression* there is the most deficiency. Salvator has thrown over the hero's face a quantity of squalid hair; and the spectator must, in a great measure, make out the expression from his own imagination. I speak only of the face, which wants something of the *dignity* of wretchedness; in the *action* and *character*, greatness, and misery are well united.

In lord Burlington's gallery at Chiswick, we see the same subject by Vandyck. Both those pictures are equally celebrated; but I think Salvator's is greatly superior. With

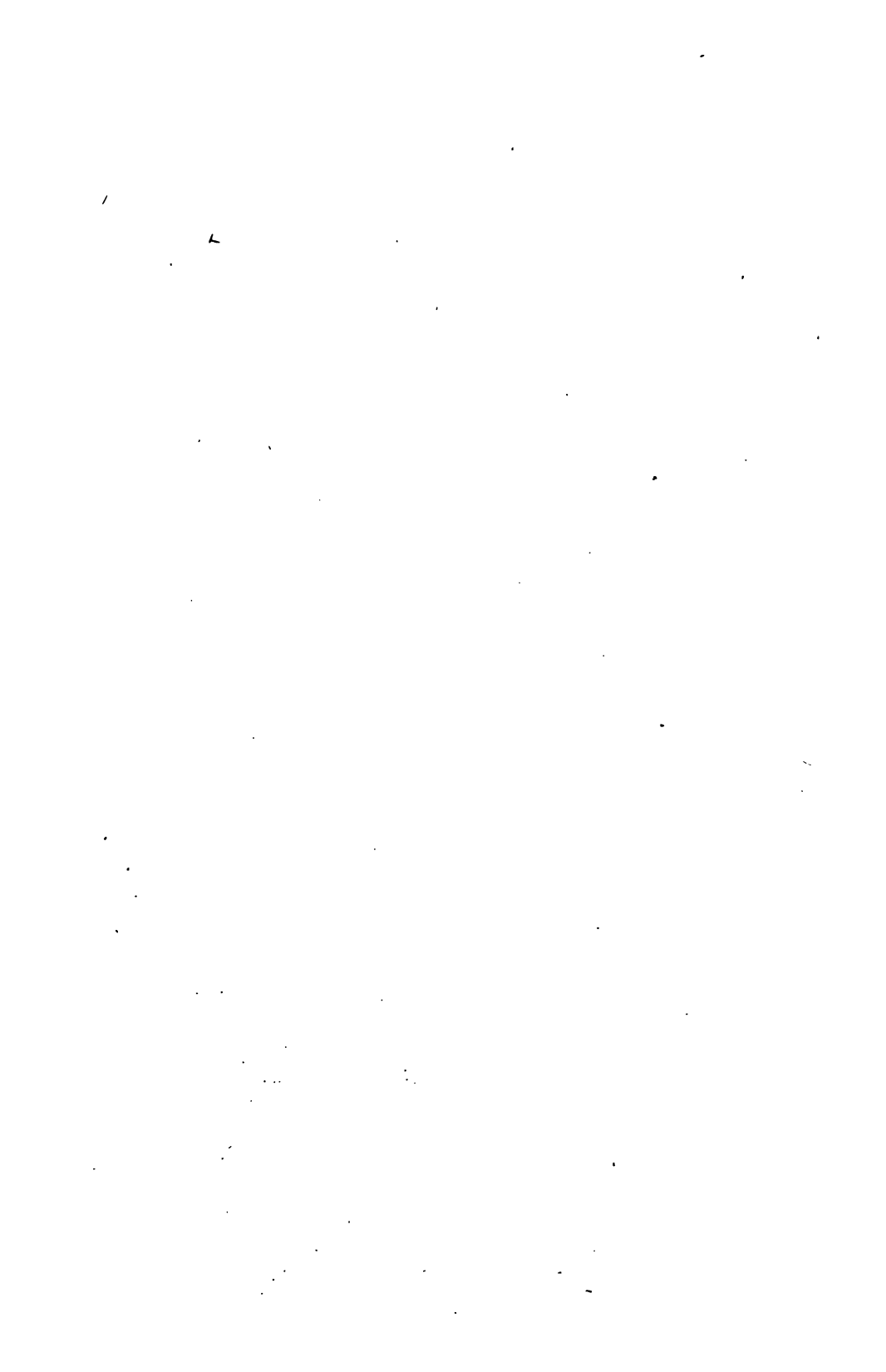
regard to *design*, Vandyck's accompanying figures engage the eye too much; and confound the story. It is better imagined also to represent the old chief, as Salvator has done, in his military habit; than dressed in a civil garment. The story so told is better told; and the mind is more interested. In point of *composition* also we give the preference to Salvator. Vandyck's detached figures are no groups. Nor is there that *harmony of colouring*, and agreeable mass of light in his picture, which strikes us in the other. *Expression* is the only part, in which Vandyck enters into contest with Salvator. There is a union of great *dignity*, and *wretchedness* in every part of his principal figure; and the expression of the soldier is inimitable. He is certainly however too interesting for a secondary figure; at the same time, his expression is an index to the spectator, and refers him to Bellisarius, as the object of concern. After all, perhaps there may be as much *expression* in the wonder mixed with pity, and the respectful distance of Salvator's soldiers, as in the melancholy dejection of Vandyck's. Such a mode of expression certainly gives an air of
grandeur

grandeur to the fallen chief, which Vandyck has lost by mixing him with low characters.

Besides this picture of Bellifarius, lord Townsend has another very capital one — Mary of Medicis by Reubens. This is an admirable portrait. In expression it excels. Mary's misfortunes, after the death of her husband, Henry IV., had shrivelled her form, and thrown the gloom of melancholy over her countenance. But here it is arrayed in all its courtly smiles, its cheerful air, its liveliness, and sprightly smirk, which might be natural, but were most probably assumed. The colouring is equal to any effort of the pencil: and the display of light on the head, and linen round the neck is happily introduced. The hands are very inferior to the head; and it would perhaps be no injury to the picture, if they were removed by a narrower frame. — Mary of Medicis was a great encourager of the arts. She saw the merit of Reubens, and professed herself his patroness. At her request he engaged in that noble work, which adorns the Luxemburgh gallery.

Pictures, like these, suggest an idea of painting between history, and portrait, which might be pursued, I think, with great advantage. History-painting, like epic poetry, is certainly the grandest production of the art. But we seldom see a history-piece completely executed, even by the best masters. To conceive a noble design—to manage the various *parts*—character—expression—action—drawing—drapery—and to *unite* all these parts harmoniously by composition—colouring—and light—is not easily accomplished. There is at least a better chance for success, if the painter should select some historical character, as Salvator has done here; and studying it attentively, lay out his whole strength upon it. He might easily make it intelligible, by some little appendage. Moses might be distinguished by resting on the *two tables of the covenant*: St. Paul, by holding in his hand, *an epistle to the Romans*: Cæsar, by a map of Gaul: Peter of Moscow, by a plan of Petersburg; and so on. I conceive indeed, that many awkward resemblances would often

often be made of all these characters; yet still there might be a better chance for a good picture, than when these characters are brought into some historical *composition*. There are fewer points to guard against, and of course less danger of failing. — In general indeed we stand a better chance of a pleasing picture, even from *common portraits*, than from *compositions*. And indeed, if I were about to furnish a gallery from pictures now in my memory, I should chuse to have it adorned with portraits; as I remember more portraits, that are throughout pleasing pictures, than I remember history-pieces. Among the first that occur to my memory are the Cornaro-family in Northumberland-house — a full-length of Charles I., over a chimney-piece in Hampton-court — a portrait of Christiern king of Denmark, in the same palace — Reubens, and his wife, at Blenheim — a portrait of an earl of Danby at Hamilton-house, in Scotland; and some others, which appeared to me throughout excellent. Whereas I hardly remember one historical piece, however beautiful in many of it's parts, in which there was not something disgusting.



S E C T. VII.

FROM *Raynham* a few miles brought us to *Houghton-hall*, which the late lord Orford, formerly sir Robert Walpole, built, and furnished with a noble collection of pictures.

Houghton-hall stands low; and is surrounded by an ample park. It was built on the site of an old family mansion; and such trees as *formerly* adorned it, are large; but, in general the plantations are modern; and it is easy to trace, from the growth of the woods, and the vestiges of hedge-rows, where the ambition of the minister made his ornamental inroads into the acres of his inheritance. Taste however then was not. No Brown, at that time, existed, to conduct the channels of wealth. And tho there are many good scenes in this park, (as it is impossible

impossible to have wood without beauty) yet an eye used to the juster improvements of taste, is every where hurt; nor can the magnificence of the *whole* atone for a number of awkward *parts*.

The house is a stately, heavy building, joined by colonades to large wings; the whole extending four hundred and fifty feet. The stables are superb. The rooms are of a moderate size, except the hall, and the saloon; the former of which is decorated in a very pleasing manner. It is plain, simple, and elegant. I should have liked it better, if the bases of the statues, and all the other ornamental parts, had been of the same plain stone-colour, with which the room is painted. The furniture, and decorations of the whole house are grand, and rich. We scarce observed any instances of littleness or affectation. The window-cases, and doors are of mahogany, gilt, and very grand.

But the house is not the object at Houghton. The pictures attract the attention: and as this is the most celebrated collection in England, I examined them with what care I was able; and shall remark such of them as particularly pleased me. — I ought perhaps

perhaps to apologize for differing in opinion, on some occasions from Mr. Walpole, who has printed a catalogue of these pictures with remarks on several of them. But I shall always give reasons for my opinion; and my opinion, of course can have no more weight, than the reasons, which support it. I am the less scrupulous in differing from Mr. Walpole, as, in honour of his father's collection, his criticisms seem plainly inclined to the more favourable side. Mine, I hope, will not be thought too severe, tho there are very few pictures in this noble collection, which *intirely* pleased me. I had the satisfaction however, in my own vindication, to observe, that among the multitude of capital pictures, which sir Joshua Reynolds saw in his journey through Holland, and Flanders, there is scarce one, in which he does not find something he dislikes.

THE COMMON PARLOUR.

A portrait of Gibbons, by Kneller. This is one of the best pictures I have seen by this slovenly master. He seldom painted with
care

care, tho he was able to paint well; when he took pains.

A sketch of king William on horse-back, by Kneller. The *freedom, spirit, and harmony* of this sketch are admirable. The great picture at Hampton-court, painted from it, hath none of these qualities.

A cook's-shop, by Teniers. I mention this picture, because it is esteemed a very valuable one. I saw little in it myself, except *good colouring*. The composition I thought very bad.

But the cook's-shop, on the opposite side, by Martin de Vos, is equal to any praise. Martin was Snyder's master. He had less reputation than his scholar; but more merit. This picture is a masterpiece. It displays a grand confusion of objects; and yet preserves a noble whole. The several parts too are admirably painted. The greyhound, and the cat, the turkey, and the fawn are all excellent. If there be any deficiency, it is in point of light, which might have been better distributed. This picture is seven feet ten inches long; by five feet, eight.

A Bacchanalian, by Reubens, painted in his best style of colouring. The *composition, light,*
and

and *expression*, are all admirable. With regard to *particulars*, the woman, and the sucking satyrines are particularly beautiful.

Sir Thomas Chaloner, by Vandyck, is a very fine portrait.

A friar's head, by Reubens, is painted with admirable warmth of colouring.

In Rembrandt's wife, by Rembrandt himself, are united all the beauties of the master; his strong colouring — his management of light, and the spirit of his touches.

The library, and two or three bed-chambers, which we were carried into next, contain nothing very striking. In the drawing-room are several good portraits, which would have attracted the eye in any other place.

THE SALOON.

On a table stands an admirable bronze, by John of Bologna. It represents a Roman carrying off a Sabine.

The *stoning of St. Stephen* by Le Sœur, I have heard called one of the capital pieces in this collection. I am sorry to say, it did not please me. There is an awkwardness in the

the figures, particularly in the principal one, which is very displeasing; and it has besides so many offensive parts, that no beauties (and it has many) could atone for them in my eyes; or bring it to them with satisfaction.

The holy family, by Vandyck, is another celebrated picture, which I could not admire; tho Mr. Walpole tells us, it was twice sold for fourteen hundred pounds. There is nothing, it is true, disgusting in it, except perhaps a little frippery; but as *a whole*, it wants composition; a sobriety in the *general complexion* of the colouring; and a harmony in the tints. It is nine feet by seven.

Mary Magdalen washing the feet of Christ, by Reubens. This picture is one of the noblest monuments of the genius of Reubens, that is to be seen in England. It contains fourteen figures, as large as the life. We seldom see, in one piece, so numerous a collection of expressive heads. — The point of time seems to be taken, just after Christ had said, *Thy sins be forgiven thee**. . An air of disgust runs through the whole table. The expression

* See Luke vii.

in Simon's face is admirable. With whatever view he invited his divine guest, it is very evident he was disappointed. The whole picture indeed is an excellent comment upon St. Luke. Our Saviour's face has great sweetness, grace, and dignity. All the other characters are fine; the two full faces, especially, which are nearest our Saviour. The attendants are all good figures; particularly the girl carrying the dish. The Magdalen is the worst figure in the picture. She is rather awkward and clumsy: but her passion is well expressed. A penitential sorrow, beyond the sense of anything but its own unworthiness, has taken possession of her. Her eyes are finely coloured with high-swollen grief. Among deceptions, we seldom see a better, than the watery hue of that tear which is nearest the eye. Our Saviour's hands are bad.

We are *inclined* to dwell more on the *parts* of this picture, than on the *whole*. And yet the *composition*, tho not perfect, is far from being disagreeable. Its chief want, as a *whole*, is a balance of *shade*. Reubens is often, I think, faulty in this particular. This picture is eight feet by six.

Titian's

Titian's son, and his nurse, by Titian. The latter is a dismal character, probably so intended; but well painted.

The Cyclops, by Luca Jordano. The nearest figure is awkward; the breast and arms of the other are good.

Dædalus, and Icarus, by Le Brun. The latter is a fine figure.

THE CARLO MARATT ROOM.

We have here a collection of about twenty pictures, by this master, and his scholars — almost a complete school. It is esteemed very valuable; was purchased at a great expense; and is much admired by connoisseurs. It hurts me to dissent from any general opinion: but the works of this master have always appeared in my eye to want something, which every good picture should have. I can see in them many fine heads, great sweetness in the Madonas, broad folds of drapery, elegant attitudes, and pleasing expression: but still they are unpleasant pictures. There seems to be a deficiency both in the *colouring*, and in the *execution*. — The *colouring* is gaudy.

A glare,

A glare, which hurts the eye, runs through every picture. There is no sobriety in the tints; no harmony; no balance. Instead of a whole, you have only a piece of splendid patch-work. — The *execution* is as disagreeable. There is so much effeminate softness, and want of spirit in it, that you do not think you are surveying the work of a great master; but rather of some pupil, copying with fear, and exactness. It is not necessary for a painter to execute with the fire of Bourgoigne, but without some degree of freedom, and spirit, his *execution* will never please.

The head of Clement IX. appeared to me, as far as I could compare my ideas, to be a very inferior picture to that at Chiswick, by the same master. That picture, as I remember, is warmly coloured, and even touched with spirit. This is tamely executed; and spread over with a bluish tinge, which is a female tint, and here unnatural.

THE EMBROIDERED BED-CHAMBER.

A holy family, by Nic. Poussin (5. 7. by 4. 3.) In this picture the *composition*, *grouping*,

ing, beads, characters, expression, and drapery are all good: but there is neither harmony, nor beauty in the colouring. A disagreeable blackness pervades the whole.

Two cattle pieces, by Rosa of Tivoli. The cattle in both are finely painted; but the composition in neither is good.

THE CABINET.

Reubens' wife, by Vandyck. This is an admirable portrait. I should not hesitate to call it a master-piece. She is at full length, dressed in black satin, with a hat. Nothing can be easier, more elegant, and graceful than this figure. The colouring too is beautiful; and the whole picture; and every part of it, is pleasing. This portrait I should place among the first in my collection, mentioned in the 39th page. — When we see such a portrait as this by Vandyck; and in the same collection, one of his historical pieces, (the holy family just mentioned) which falls greatly below excellence, there is room for candour to believe, that Reubens might have had other motives, than those of envy, and jealousy, (which are the motives commonly ascrib-

ed) for advising his favourite pupil to apply himself to portrait-painting, rather than to history. The advice appears to have been very judicious. Vandyck does not seem to have much invention, nor to have excelled in composition. I do not remember that his composition pleased me in any picture, (if we may judge from prints,) in which he has many figures to manage. The family-picture at Wilton, tho in his own way, is very deficient in this respect*.

Reubens' family, by Jordano of Antwerp, is a mere collection of heads: but every head is a piece of nature.

Christ laid into the sepulchre, by Parmigiano. There is great expression in the figures; and great beauty in the colouring, and execution of this picture; but the painter has allowed himself so little scope (for it is scarce above miniature size) that it gives a poverty, and minuteness to his picture. It was probably intended as a design for a larger piece.

A very fine head of Innocent X., by Velasco.

* See remarks on this subject, in the Appendix to the Western Tour.

Friars distributing alms to the poor, by John Miel. There is a good balance of light, and shade; and an agreeable whole in this picture.

Two pictures by Bourgonnone. One of them represents a battle; the other, the field after it; in which the principal group is a dying officer, confessing to a friar. Both are excellent pictures; but the first is a masterpiece.

A sketch by Rubens of the middle compartment of the banqueting-house at Whitehall. The freedom, and spirit of it are admirable.

Six sketches by the same master, of triumphal arches; equally free; and beautiful.

Bathsheba bringing Abishag to David, by Vanderwerffe. This picture is as highly finished, as the finest enamel; and yet the freedom and spirit of it are preserved. The group is good. In Bathsheba you see the remains of a very fine woman: but in David there is a mixture of youth; which by no means gives us the idea of that total decrepitude, under which the bible-history represents him. Abishag is the *fair, young damsel* of the text; and her modest, and maidenly, behaviour

behaviour are finely expressed. — After all, we survey such high-finished pictures only as curiosities. Their style is an effect of vitiated taste. They barely please the eye: they want that strength, and boldness; that energy and fire, which raise raptures.

Two flower-pieces, by Van-Huysum. These admirable pictures are in the same style of neatness, as the last. But in flowers the *finished manner* is liable to no exceptions. Nobody expects to look at a flower-piece with emotion. If it *please the eye*, it is sufficient. Van-Huysum seems to be a greater master of composition and the knowledge of light, than Baptiste. In most of the capital pictures, that I have seen by Baptiste, particularly in those of the duke of St. Alban's at Windsor, the eye is hurt by ill-balanced composition, and patches of light. But in the few I have met with by Van-Huysum, all is well put together, and well massed. In these two pictures, especially in that, which consists solely of flowers, he is particularly excellent both in the composition, and in the distribution of light. His manner has not the least stiffness; tho every object, flowers,

fruits, and insects, are finished with the last characteristic touch, and tint of nature.

Two landscapes in the manner of Salvator, by Bourgoigne. They are well touched; and like the master they imitate; but the composition is very indifferent in both.

The death of Joseph, by Velasco. This is a noble, and affecting picture. The story is well told. The characters rise to the imagination. The expression is just: the composition good; the lights broad: in short, the *whole*, and every *part* of this picture is pleasing.

THE MARBLE PARLOUR.

The earl of Danby, at full length, by Vandyck, is excellent in all its parts, and in the management of the whole.

Two fruit-pieces, by Michael Angelo, are both well-painted; but that which hangs near Sir Thomas Wharton, is a confused composition.

This large room was originally intended for a green-house: but when Sir Robert Walpole lost his employments in the year 1742, he fitted it up for the pictures, which he brought from Downing-street.

The doctors of the church consulting on the immaculate conception, by Guido, deserves our first attention. This very celebrated picture, we are told by Mr. Walpole, was bought in Italy by lord Orford; and sent to Civita Vecchia to be shipped for England. But Innocent XIII., who was then pope, unwilling that such a treasure should be carried out of the country, remanded it. At length however, through his particular regard for the character of lord Orford, he permitted its exportation. — From this account one should imagine it had uncommon merit. The colouring is certainly exquisite. There is a clearness, and brightness, and brilliancy in it which we rarely find; and hence, I suppose, arrives its chief merit among connoisseurs. The draperies also are broad, and painted in a noble style. The heads

too, in general, are finely touched. The doctor in red particularly is an admirable figure; and the virgin who sits in the clouds clothed in white, is throughout *immaculate*, and is as lovely and charming a form, as the imagination of man can conceive. These beauties must needs be acknowledged: but still the picture, I think, on the whole, unpleasing. In the first place, *the story is ill told*. The dispute about the immaculate conception was one of the fiercest, in which the Roman church engaged. But here it is carried on with a most provoking indifference. All is still, and quiet. Each disputant seems possessed of that calmness, which might suit an evangelist writing a gospel. — If the painter objected to the character of an enraged polemic, yet surely a proper zeal, an earnestness at least, might have been allowed. — Here was an opportunity also to pay a compliment to one side, or the other; and it would have furnished copious room for expression, if he had introduced one party laying down his point; and the other abashed, angry, or convinced. — Or if the painter had not chosen to decide a matter *so important*, he ought certainly to have *carried*

ried on the dispute in some shape, if he meant to tell his story with truth. — But even if the truth of history had been preserved, there would remain, I fear, still a great deficiency in the *composition*, and in the *distribution of light*: and, what is surprizing, there is but little *harmony*, I think, in the colouring, which is but ill-atoned for by its brilliancy. — It is also disgusting to see so great a difference between the carnations of the two principal figures. The two doctors seem to be the inhabitants of two different climates. This however is not very uncommon in Guido's pictures. The wits sometimes say, that in the same piece, one of his pictures will appear roasted, and another boiled. (8. 11. by 6.)

The prodigal son, by Salvator Rosa, is painted with the full spirit, freedom, and force of this pleasing master. That agreeable style of colouring, that sober, pleasant tint, which issued so often from his pallet, is here displayed in great perfection. But this is all that can be said for the picture. The character of the prodigal is ill-preserved. Instead of a melancholy posture, brooding over his misery, or the madness of despair imprecating curses upon his folly,

folly, he is represented in a cold, unanimated attitude, kneeling indeed; but without any fervour either of passion, or devotion. His garb is tattered; but his face wears the hue of plenty. The muscles of his arms, and legs are full-fed; nor has he that apparent distress about him, which his condition required. — The appendages of the piece too are ill put together; and instead of completing a *whole*, tend rather to destroy it. But of all the disagreeable parts of this picture, the cow which runs athwart the prodigal, and cuts him at right angles, is the most displeasing.

Meleager, and Atalanta, by Reubens. This is a large cartoon, (20. 9. by 10. 7.) designed for tapestry; and purposely therefore painted in a light, gawdy stile. However proper it might be for *this use*, it certainly makes a *bad picture*. It is a vast, glaring, disgusting object; and ill-suited to the company it appears in. There is little composition in it; and no balance of light, and shade. Atalanta is a good figure; but all the other parts are bad, some of the dogs particularly so.

Four markets by Snyders. The first is a fish-market. The composition is good. There is a profusion of parts blended into an agreeable whole.

whole. One circumstance only injures the general shape — the formal repetition of a man on each side of the picture. The light is well-disposed.

The second is a fowl-market. The disposition of the light here is bad ; tho a slight alteration would have made it pleasing. Had the swan been placed in the room of the boar's-head, it would have made a good mass.

The third is a green-market. Nothing can be better managed, or more delightfully painted, than the mass of greens : but the picture is disagreeably broken into two parts.

The fourth is a fruit-market. The fruit is richly painted : but the picture is ill-composed. The figures are good ; but there is no whole (II. 1. by 6. 9.)

A lionsess very well painted by Reubens.

An old woman's head also by Reubens. The face is good : but the drapery, and every thing else is disagreeable.

A head by Boll, finely painted.

A holy family, by Procaccino. The heads in this picture are very fine ; but there is a disagreeable glare of light.

An usurer, and his wife, by Quintin Matsis of Antwerp. This picture is nearly the same,

as

as that, which Matsis painted for Charles the first at Windsor. There is infinite labour in it: but these laboured pieces do not please, like those thrown off in all the freedom of genius. They have the appearance of being merely mechanical.

The exposition of Cyrus, by Castiglione. This master seems to have understood the doctrine of harmony; or the production of effect from a combination of according tints. At least, I have made this observation on the few of Castiglione's pictures, I have seen.

In this picture, the harmonious arrangement of tints is very striking. Each colour unites so kindly with its neighbour, that, altho the whole is as rich as possible, every part is in perfect repose. — The effect, which Castiglione produces by an effusion of rich colours, Salvator produces by one *sober tint*. They are both masters of the art of harmonizing a picture: but Castiglione's art is the greater, as he has more variety of tints to manage. With regard to particulars, all the figures in this picture are beautiful. The dog is finely painted: but as it is so capital in the story, it is not enough concerned in the action. The scene is scarce sylvan enough for the subject. (2. 4. by 3. 6.)

The

The companion of the last picture, by the same master, is perhaps only an effusion of fancy, which Castiglione was fond of indulging. The subject of it is certainly obscure. It has all that effect of harmony, which we admire in the other. There are some objects, a cow, a dog, and a goat, disagreeably introduced: but every thing else is beautiful.

The adoration of the shepherds, by old Palma, forms a disagreeable whole. But there is fine expression in the shepherd dressed in green.

A nymph and shepherd, by Carlo Cignani. The nymph is a charming figure: the composition is beautiful; and the light would have been well thrown, if the ram, a part of the boy's back, and the bottle had been in shade. (4. 1. by 3. 4.)

Reubens' waggon — a landscape, which goes under that title from the introduction of a broken waggon on the foreground. There is little of the hue of nature in this landscape; and as little of the effect of harmony. The hills are green, the sky is blue; and the rest of the objects of a brownish tint. In all this there is discord. It is called a moonlight: but there is nothing of the shadowy
dusk

dusk of evening in it; nor of the lunar splendor. — In the *composition*, there is much nature; but it is rather too unadorned. Bolswert's print has contributed to make this landscape famous. (4. 1. by 2. 10.)

The sacrifice of Isaac by Rembrandt. We seldom see a picture of this master in so good a style. We have here something like Italian elegance. Abraham's head is finely painted; and full of every expression, which the subject could inspire. Isaac's body is a fine piece of anatomy, and colouring. The angel is a bad figure, and injures the whole. The falling knife is an unpleasant circumstance so near the eye. *Bodies in motion* should never be brought close to the sight. — There is a peculiar delicacy in Abraham's covering his son's face with his hand — a delicacy which one should least have looked for in this master. We have a delicate touch of the same kind in Virgil: but in Virgil we might expect it. The passage I allude to, is that, in which Dædalus is introduced representing, in sculpture, the history of his own life. When he comes to that part, in which his son was concerned, the poet, with his usual feeling, tells us, the artist could not proceed:

—— Tu

— Tu quoque magnam
Partem opere in tanto, fineret dolore, Icare, haberes.
Bis conatus erat casus effingere in auro :
Bis patriæ cecidere manus. —

The old man, and his sons, gathering sticks, by Salvator. This picture is not painted in Salvator's usual manner. Tho it cannot be called a rich picture; yet there are many more tints employed, than in the prodigal son, or in the generality of Salvator's historical compositions. For myself, I prefer his sober style. Salvator can produce an effect with his sober browns; but does not (in this picture at least) make out so good a one with a greater variety of colours. The composition, and figures in this picture are good: but I have no great relish for such low unmeaning subjects. (6. by 4. 2.)

The adoration of the shepherds, by Guido. The single figures, especially their heads, and actions, are fine; but a *whole* is seldom found in an Italian picture. This is an octagon, on every side, 3.

Scipio's continence, by Nic. Poussin. The great beauty of this picture consists in the chastness, and classical purity of its style. We admire the elegance, and simplicity of the whole;

whole; tho in the composition there is nothing very striking. With regard to particulars — excellence, and defect, are pretty equally distributed among the figures. (5. 2. by 3. 8.)

Moses striking the rock, by Nic. Pouffin. This is by many degrees, a more masterly performance, than its companion. It's purity of style is the same: but the composition, the groups, and figures are all better. The principal figure is not perhaps enough principal. The great deficiency of this picture is in the distribution of light. It is not massed so as to make a whole. — This piece was painted by Nic. Pouffin for Stella, who afterwards, in compliment, engraved it. (6. 3. by 3. 11.)

The adoration of the Magi, by C. Maratt. I thought this the best picture of Maratt's I had ever seen. There is great simplicity in the whole; and the figures are fine. — But it is a pity this master could paint nothing without a profusion of staring colours. (6. 11. by 4. 4.)

Solomon's idolatry, by Stella. This is the only piece I ever saw by this master. It represents Solomon sacrificing, in the midst of his idolatrous women; and exhibits a very high scene of what may be called, voluptuous devotion.

tion. We cannot have a stronger idea of the affecting story of that wife profligate. It is painted on black, and gold marble; which is, in many parts, left as the ground; and gives a great richness to the picture. — The characteristic of this piece is *elegance*, which is displayed in the whole, and in every part. (3. 5. by 1. 10.)

A sea-port by Claude Lorain. If the most vivid effusions of light, and the most harmonious touches of nature can make a good landscape, this undoubtedly is one. But here is no country described; no beautiful objects; no shapes; no composition.

The other picture by the same hand, in this gallery, describes a pleasing country: but, for want of good composition, all its beautiful tints, and hues of nature, can scarce bring the eye to it with pleasure. — On the account of this great deficiency in composition, obvious in so many of the works of Claude, I have thought few masters are less indebted to the engraver, than he is. The print gives us the *composition* chiefly of the master, which is what we least value in Claude. But it can give us no idea of that lovely colouring, in which alone his works excell all others.

S E C T. VIII.

SINCE these remarks were made, this grand collection of pictures hath been fold to the empress of Russia; and now exists in England only in the prints, which that great encourager of the arts, Mr. Alderman Boydell, hath had engraved from them. The drawings, from which these prints were made, adorn a gallery in Pall-Mall, which the alderman built on purpose to receive them. I never saw these drawings; but from the hands employed on them, I suppose they are good.

For the amusement of the reader, I shall annex to my own remarks, the value which was set on each picture by the Empress's agents. It will appear, that the valuer of collection of pictures hath not weighed in my scales. Which of us is right, is my part to decide. All I can say is

priety on the subject, is, first, that I endeavoured, as well as I could, to appreciate the value of each picture by its approach to nature; or it's conformity to the rules of art — and, secondly, that I well know, connoisseurs are often guided by prejudices. A master may be famous for some particular mode of colouring, to the neglect of every thing else — or he may be famous for drawing — or for the scarcity of his pictures — or perhaps he may be a fashionable painter. From the influence of all these things, it often happens, that pictures may be considered as possessing more merit, than they really have.

After all, however these pictures might have been valued (as they ought) not according to their *real merit*; but according to their *saleable qualities*; and if so, I may have only to oppose the tricks and artifices of a few picture-dealers; not the settled judgment of any distinguished lovers of the art.

		£.
Horfe's head, by Vandyck	- -	50
Battle, by Julio Romano	- -	150
Susannah, by Reubens	- -	80
Landscape, by Swanevelt	- -	30
		Jupiter,

Jupiter and Europa, after Guido	-	£.	40
Galatea, by Zimeni	-	-	40
A Woverman	-	-	250
Venus, by Sacchi	-	-	80
Holy family. Da Reggio	-	-	70
Architecture, by Steenwyck	-	-	80
A cook's shop, by Teniers	-	-	800
A cook's shop, by De Vos	-	-	200
Bacchanalian, by Reubens	-	-	250
Nativity, by Cignani	-	-	250
Sir Thomas Chaloner, by Vandyck	-	-	200
Sir Thomas Gresham, by Ant. More			40
Eraſmus, by Holbein	-	-	40
A friar's head, by Reubens	-	-	40
Fr. Hall, by himself	-	-	40
School of Athens, by Le Brun	-	-	250
Rembrandt's wife, by Rembrandt	-	-	300
Reubens' wife, by Reubens	-	-	60
A head, by Salvator	-	-	40
Inigo Jones, by Vandyck	-	-	50
Two ruins, by Viviano	-	-	40
Daughters of lord Wharton, by Vandyck			200
Judgment of Paris, and sleeping Bac-			
chus, by Jordano	-	-	500
Charles I. and his queen, by Vandyck			400
Lord Wharton, by Vandyck	-	-	200
Lord Wandesford, by Vandyck	-	-	150

		£.
Lady Wharton, by Vandyck	-	100
Jane Wenman, by Vandyck	-	100
Christ's baptism, by Albano	-	700
St. Stephen, by Le Sœur	- -	500
Holy family, by Vandyck	- -	1600
Magdalen, by Reubens	- -	1600
Holy family, by Cantarini	- -	300
Holy family, by Titian	- -	100
Simeon, by Guido	- - -	150
Virgin, by Aug. Caracci	- -	200
Titian's son, and nurse, by Titian	-	100
Holy family, by Sarto	- -	250
Affumption, by Morillio	- -	700
Adoration, by Morillio	- -	600
Cyclops, by Jordano	- - -	200
Dædalus, by Le Brun	- - -	150
Clement IX., by Carl. Maratt	-	250
Galatea, and it's companion	- -	500
Holy family, by Carl. Maratt	-	80
Virgin and Jesus, by C. Maratt	-	200
St. Cæcilia, by C. Maratt	- -	260
Affumption, by C. Maratt	- -	100
Virgin and Joseph, by C. Maratt	-	150
St. Catharine's marriage, by C. Maratt	-	100
Virgin in the clouds, by C. Maratt	-	60
St. John, by C. Maratt	- -	60
Venus and Cupid, by C. Maratt	-	150
		Holy

Holy family, by Beretoni	- -	£. 200
Assumption, by Beretoni	- -	80
Pool of Bethesda — Christ on the mount — Apollo, and Daphne — Bacchus, and Ariadne, by Chiari	- - - -	450
Apollo — Diana, by Rosalba	-	80
Drawing of a head, by Raphael	-	100
St. Catharine, by Guido	- -	20
Birth of the Virgin, and presentation, by Jordano	- - - -	60
Flight into Egypt, by Morillio	-	300
Crucifixion, by Morillio	- -	150
Hercules, and Omphale, by Romanelli		100
Holy family, by Pouffin	- -	800
Reubens' wife, by Vandyck	- -	600
Reubens' family, by Jord. of Ant- werp	- - - -	400
Winter, by Giacomo Baffan	- -	100
Summer, by Leonardo Baffan	-	100
Boors, by Teniers	- -	150
Christ appearing to Mary, by P. Cor- tona	- - - -	2
Judgment of Paris; and of Midas, by Scavoni	- - - -	
Christ intombed, by Parmigiano		

Adoration of the Magi, by V. Breughel	£.	100
Virgin and child, by Barocchio	-	50
Venus, by A. Caracci	- - -	70
Head, by Dobson	- - -	25
St. John, by C. Dolci	- - -	70
Innocent X. by Velasco	- - -	60
Boy's head, by Luti	- - -	20
Friars, and it's companion, by J. Miol		120
Dying officer, by Bourgognione	-	100
It's companion	- - - -	50
Boors, by Teniers	- - -	50
Boors, by Ostade	- - -	30
Christ in the sepulchre, by Giacomo		
Bassan	- - - -	40
Holy family, by Wiliberts	- -	40
Holy family, by Rottenhammer	-	40
Virgin and Child, by Alex. Veronese		40
Soldiers, by S. Rosa	- - -	50
Virgin, by Morillio	- - -	80
Virgin, by Seb. Concha	- -	20
Edward VI. by Holbein	- -	100
Laban, by Sebas. Bourdun	- -	200
Banqueting-house ceiling, by Reubens		100
Six sketches, by Reubens	- -	600
Bathsheba, by Venderwerffe	- -	700
Two flower-pieces, by V. Huysum	-	1200
Christ		

Christ and Mary, by Phil. Laura	-	£. 100
Holy family, by Bellino	- -	60
Two landscapes, by Bourgognione	-	100
Two landscapes, by Gasp. Pouffin	-	40
Holy family, by Ponzoni	- -	160
Death of the Innocents, by Seb. Bour-		
don	- - - - -	400
Death of Joseph, by Velasco	- -	200
St. Christopher, by Elsheimer	- -	50
Lord Danby, by Vandyck	- -	200
Two pictures of the Ascension, by P.		
Veronese	- - - - -	200
Doctors of the church, by Guido	-	3500
Prodigal, by S. Rosa	- - -	700
Meleager, by Reubens	- - -	300
Four markets, by Snyders	- -	1000
Curtius, and Cocles, by Mola, together		800
Lions, by Reubens	- - -	100
Architecture, by Polidore, or J. Ro-		
mano	- - - - -	300
Two old women's heads, by Reubens,		
and Boll	- - - - -	200
Cupid, by Eliz. Sirani	- - -	60
Holy family, by Procacino	- -	
Ufurer, by Q. Matsis	- - -	
Job's friends, by Guido	- -	

		£.
Europa, by P. Brill, and Africa	-	300
Dives and Lazarus, by P. Veronese		100
Exposition of Cyrus, and its compa-		
nion, by Castiglione	- -	300
Adoration, by Old Palma	- -	250
Holy family, by Old Palma	- -	200
Moon-light, by Reubens	- -	300
Nymph and Shepherd, by Car. Cignani		200
Emblematic picture, by Bourdon	-	200
Abraham, and Hagar, by P. Cortona		1000
Abraham, and Isaac, by Rembrandt	-	250
Old man, and his sons, by S. Rosa	-	250
Adoration of the Shepherds, by Guido		400
Continence of Scipio, by Pouffin	-	600
Moses striking the rock, by Pouffin		900
Intombing Christ, by L. Caracci	-	300
The infant Moses, by Le Sœur	-	150
Adoration of the Magi, by C. Maratt		300
Cattle, by Teniers	- - -	150
Landscape, by G. Pouffin	- -	100
Last supper, by Raphael	- -	500
Solomon's idolatry, by Stella	-	250
Two landscapes, by C. Lorain	-	1200
Two landscapes, by G. Pouffin	-	250
Joconda, mistress to Francis I.	-	100
Apollo, by Cartarini	- - -	50
		Holy

			£.
Holy family, by Castelli	-	-	200
Ganymede, by M. Ang. Buon. :	-	-	100
Virgin and Child, by Dominic :	-	-	100
Salutation, by Albani	-	-	200
			<hr/>
			£40,555
			<hr/>

SECT.



S E C T. IX.

FROM Houghton we proceeded to *Holkam*, over furzy downs, and beautiful sheep-walks; on which great numbers of sheep were grazing in separate flocks, and gave some life to a country, otherwise but uninteresting.

At Stower, the road enters sandy lanes, with neat clipped-hedges; but barren of wood. As we approach the sea, the ground rises in several parts.

Holkam stands on an easy eminence. A beautiful piece of water is the first object, that strikes the eye; and an island, well-wooded, gives it variety. The front of the house is elegant; tho perhaps too much broken.—— This was however all we could see; for tho we had, with some inconvenience, accommodated ourselves to the day, on which alone we were informed,

informed, the house was to be seen ; yet when we arrived on the spot, we found a new difficulty. It seems the perquisites for shewing it are assigned to an old house-keeper, and as she happened to be out of the way, no entrance could be obtained.

From *Holkam* we pursued the road to *Wells* ; and came upon a sea-coast diversified with a small winding river — a village — a harbour — and a grove — all good objects ; yet they are so separated, and detached, that they no where appeared to advantage.

Wells is a disagreeable dirty fishing-town. A little beyond it, *Stiffkey* appears from the higher grounds, pleasantly seated on a rivulet, in a hollow, decorated with trees ; and adorned with ruins. On a nearer approach, the ruins have a good effect.

From *Stiffkey* the road passes through pleasant lanes, and leaving Cley on the left, leads to *Holt* ; a clean, neat village. In our way we proposed to take *Wolterton* and *Blicklin*, the
seats

seats of Lord Walpole, and the Earl of Buckingham.

Lord Walpole's contains nothing very interesting. A collection of chalky portraits, I know not by whom, of the late royal family, adorn the best rooms ; together with a family-picture, well composed ; but in the same style of colouring. — In the *state-room* hang two pieces of dead game over the doors. The composition and light in both are good. That with the waterfall is the best.

From Wolterton the road continues, through pleasant lanes, to *Blicklin*. The approach opens with noble views of meadow-lawns, and ancient woods, which speak the antiquity of the place. The weather however permitted us not to walk much abroad. The house is one of those mansions, which carry us into the times of our fore-fathers. The moat, the bridges, the turrets, the battlements are all impressed with the ideas of antiquity. A tale of woe also contributes to dignify this mansion. It was the birth-place of the unfortunate Ann Bolen. — Blicklin is now very expensively fitted up, and contains many grand rooms, in
which

ornamented by *distant* woods, and two or three *bazy* towers.

But the heaths soon prevail ; and become both foreground, and distance without any variety. The road leads between the bare mounds of new-inclosed commons ; nor does the eye find any thing to rest on, till within a mile of Norwich. At that distance a grand view presents itself of the town, lying on a gentle declivity, stretching over a large compass of ground ; and adorned with several towers, and spires. The whole is crowned with a massy square building, which we found afterwards to be the castle, appearing in the distance to stand on a hill, in the middle of the town. It is a magnificent ruin, but too regular. On entering the suburbs, the eye loses it : but the entrance into the yard of the King's-head inn, presents it again in great beauty. You see it through the arched gate-way, which throws it into good perspective*.

Norwich is a large town, at least three miles in circumference. The river Yar (sometimes called the Wanfum) runs a mile along

* I believe a house is now built, which intercepts the view.





the eastern side of it, and defends it like a ditch. The other parts are surrounded by a wall. It is a well-built, agreeable town. You see order in every part. The great church is a Saxon pile; but good architecture of the kind. The cloisters are very noble. The castle-hill affords a rich, tho not a picturesque view; and the bridge over the castle-ditch, with all its appendages, would make a grand picture. The Yar from Norwich (to which it is navigable for large barges) pursues a winding course to Yarmouth, where it forms the peninsula, on which that town stands, and where it makes one of the best natural harbours in England.

From Norwich we set out for Ipswich. The road leads through lanes; and the country is well wooded. Tho flat, it is not unpleasant, as far as we could judge from seeing it through a drizzling rain.

Near Scole we crossed the Waveny; which divides Norfolk from Suffolk. This river, after running fifty miles towards the sea in an eastern direction, and approaching its very

shores, is opposed by a rising ground, which gives it an abrupt direction almost due north, This leads it to the river Yar; and tho its waters are sufficient to give name to a harbour of its own, it merely assists as a secondary river, in deepening, and enlarging the harbour of Yarmouth. The meadows lying along the banks of the Waveny, (which passes through them with an even, gentle course) are supposed to be among the richest in England. Here besides the cattle of the country, numerous herds of starved cattle from the highlands of Scotland, find their way. Of such pasturage they had no idea. Here they lick up grass by mouthfulls: the only contention is, which of them can eat the most, and grow fat the soonest. When they have gotten smooth coats, and swagging sides, they continue their journey to the capital, and present themselves in Smithfield, where they find many admirers.

About eight miles before we reach Ipswich, the country assumes a more variegated face. The village of Stoneham, which stands high, incompassed with wood, makes a picturesque appearance from the opposite hill.

The

The country still improves as we approach Ipswich, but chiefly in near views. Pleasing woody scenes open first on one hand; and then on the other: villas and villages adorn the landscape on every side; and here and there, a beautiful distance opens, which was now become a novelty.

About the seventh stone Mr. Bacon's at Codenham, affords a scene of noble oaks rising on the left, a little above the road. His house just opens, and shuts, among the trees, as we glide past.

Ipswich is a large, incumbered, unpleasant place. The market-house is an old rotunda, supported by wooden pillars, with a figure of justice on the top. The form is not unpleasing.

On leaving Ipswich we took the Colchester-road, through sandy, heavy lanes. The country is like what we had left; but in a less picturesque style of landscape. About six miles from Ipswich the lanes open upon a woody scene, which looks like the skirts of some vast forest.

This scenery being removed, the road is adorned with two or three beautiful dips, on

the left, intersperfed with cottages, and a variety of fine wood. Beyond these is a good distance. Soon after the tower of Dedham-church makes a picturesque appearance.

Having presented us with these views, the road suddenly shuts in all objects ; dives into a shady bottom ; and carries us into Stratford St. Mary's ; which is the last town in Suffolk.

The cattle, through all this country, are a beautiful breed of cream-coloured beasts, without horns.

S E C T. XI.

ON entering Essex, the road is more than pleasant. It leads through woody lanes; which grow still more beautiful, as we approach Colchester. Ardley-woods, which in a manner surrounded us, afforded every where the most pleasing sylvan scenes — sometimes retiring to a distance — sometimes advancing — now incircling a common with its cottages; and forming a back-ground behind them — then closing up the whole road, so as to leave the eye at a loss, where it could break out. Nor were these effects produced by copse-wood, or paltry trees; but by noble oaks, and elms; many of which, even single, had dignity enough to grace a scene.

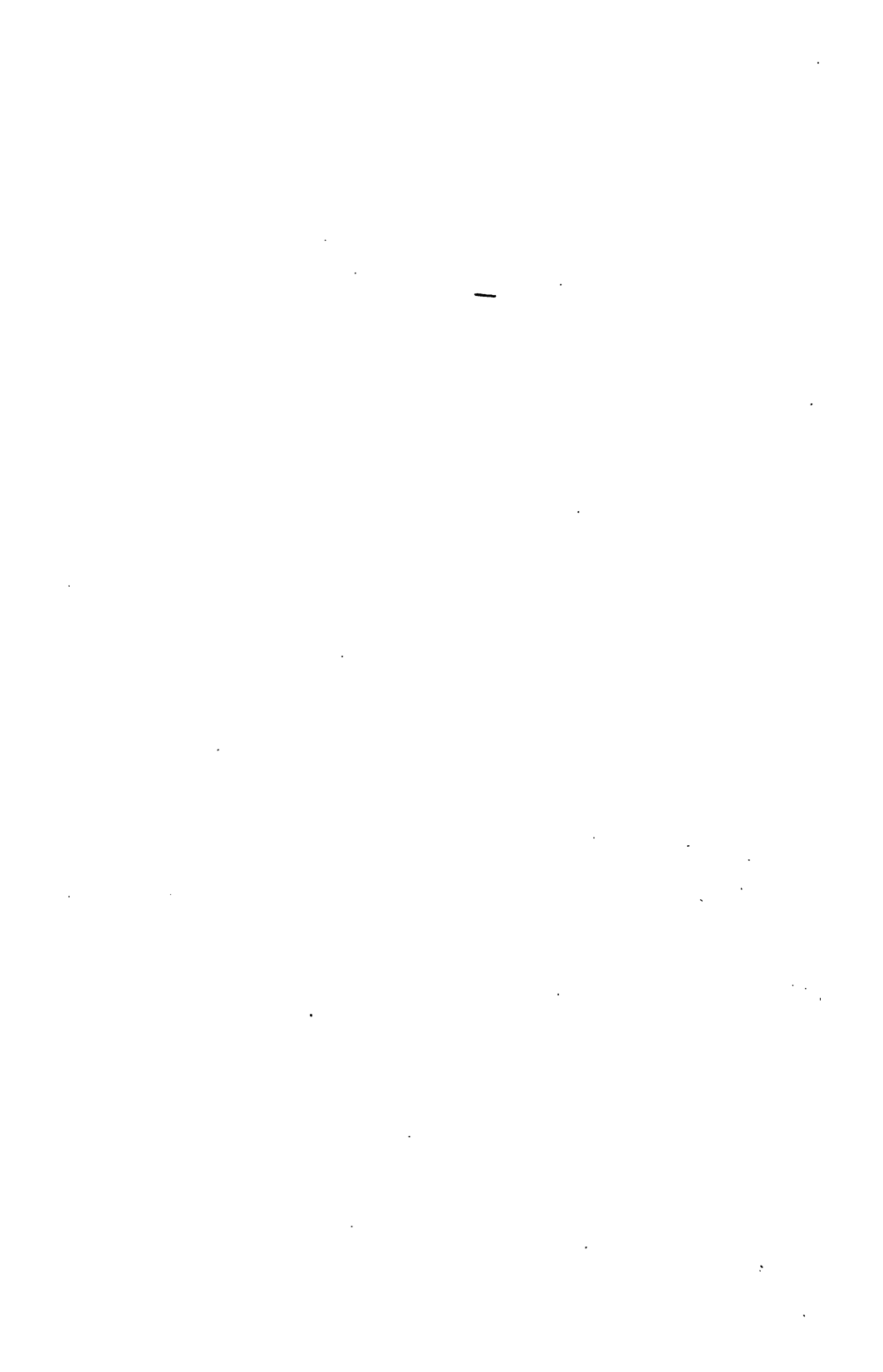
As this scenery removed, Colchester appeared at a mile's distance, stretching along the declivity of a hill. We circled the town;

and had a fine winding view of it, as we approached; entering it by St. Leonard's, where it makes a picturesque appearance. The castle is a square, heavy building, like many we had seen; but the ruins of St. Botolph's, in the middle of the town, are beautiful.

As we left Colchester, on the opposite side, our delightful scenery vanished: and the road led through garden-grounds; low cut hedges; and a naked country.

About the forty-ninth stone, we enter a flat common, where Cromwell's army sat down to besiege Colchester. His intrenchments still make a formidable figure on the heath. The defence of this place was among the most soldierly actions of the war; and the surrender of it among the most deplorable. No scene of the highest finished tragedy can go beyond those strokes of nature, which the noble historian of the times has given us in describing the execution of those gallant officers, sir Charles Lucas, and sir George Lisle. The former, tho of morose conversation, was *in the day of battle a gal-*
lant





lant man to look upon, and follow: the latter, to the fierceness of his courage added the softest and most gentle nature — was kind to all — beloved of all, and without a capacity to make an enemy. Sir Charles fell first; on which sir George stooping down, embraced him. He then stood up; and turning to the file of musketeers, who stood ready with their presented arms, desired them to step a little nearer. I'll warrant you, sir, said one of them, we'll hit you. "My friends, said sir George smiling, I have been nearer you, when you have missed me." — The story is told at length in lord Clarendon with many affecting circumstances.

About five miles from Colchester, the woods meet us again, on the right; but keep at too great a distance. The lanes still continue beautiful; tho adorned only with pollards.

At the forty-third stone we had a grand distance, composed of a noble continuance of woods, belonging to lord Grimston; & (after we had passed Kelveden, a sweet vale are taken up by Mr. Ducane's w

continue as far as Witham, a pleasant, airy, clean town.

From hence to Chelmsford we had pleasant lanes. The country is flat, and woody. About the thirty-second stone, lord Waltham's woods begin to make a fine appearance on the right; and are answered by another range on the left. The former soon advance to the road, forming by degrees an avenue, a mile long. The woods, on the other side, retire, and become the boundary to a noble bay of flat rich country.

Lord Waltham's house, to which the avenue leads, was once a royal mansion; and afterwards belonged to general Monk. We did not see it; but from the tradition of the country, it has once been a vast edifice. The kitchen contained six large fire ranges; each range occupying fifteen feet. In the centre was a bull ring. The bull was first baited in the kitchen, and afterwards roasted whole. Upon the landing of the great stair-case, a coach, and six might have turned. The hall, which is the only part of this prodigious pile now remaining, is sixty feet high.

Chelmsford

Chelmsford appears to advantage, as we approach it. The tower of the church is itself a good object; and is seen to advantage by the rich country, which is spread behind it. From hence the road affords little variety. Near the twenty-ninth stone, a bridge and other circumstances might be improved into a good view; and between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth stones, the road rises beautifully, as if it entered a wood. Ingatston-tower, surrounded with wood, is a good object, as we approach the town.

Between Ingatston and Burntwood, we turned a little to the left, to see lord Petre's new house; which presents a scene of great magnificence. Its situation, and extensive view — the woods around it — and the form of the building, are all in the grandest style. The house itself is not a pleasing object. Neither front is elegant; and the little windows in the principal one, are much the reverse. When you enter it, the lowness of the hall hurts the eye. The apartments
indeed

indeed are magnificent; and to this every thing seems to have been sacrificed. Even the stair-case is such only as belongs to a private house. The true style of architecture unites beauty, convenience, and grandeur, (where necessary,) both in the parts, and in the whole. On this journey, we had seen a noble instance of this union in Wansted-house.

Burntwood is an agreeable, clean, thoroughfare village.

From Thurdon-hill, near this place, as we emerged from a dark lane, (which is among the best modes of exhibiting a distance,) is displayed a very grand view of the Thames, winding through, what appears to be, a vast vale, bounded, on one side, by the high grounds, on which we stood, and on the other by the Kentish hills. No part of England* affords a grander specimen of this mode of scenery. Rivers, and vales we often see: but such a river as the Thames, winding through such countries as Kent, and Essex, is a sight we seldom meet with.

* See Observations on the southern coasts of England, p. 79.
To

To the grandeur of this river-view we may add the scene of navigation, which it continually displays.

Our stage to Rumford was a little varied with rising grounds: but the environs of London began now to break in upon us; and every rural idea was totally lost.



OBSERVATIONS
ON SEVERAL PARTS OF
NORTH WALES;

RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO
PICTURESQUE BEAUTY;
MADE
IN THE SUMMER OF THE YEAR 1773.



S E C T. I.

BUSINESS carried us first to Manchester; from whence we set out for Chester.

The country as far as Altringham, is flat, and woody. Dunham-hall, a seat of the earl of Stamford's, stands in a park which contains some of the stateliest timber in the country. Here the heron, a great admirer of lofty trees, has made a numerous settlement. The woods crowd up to the roads; and as you ride past, you just get a catch of the house, through two or three old-fashioned openings. From hence the road leads along pleasant lanes, in view of two or three large pieces of water; and passes close by Tabley, a handsome house, belonging to Sir John Leicester.

Northwich was our next stage. Near this town is shewn one of the greatest curiosities in England. In novels we often read of in-

H

chanted

chanted castles. Here is seen, what may well be called, an enchanted cathedral. The road to it indeed is not the most convenient. You are let down in a basket, through an opening in the earth, at least a hundred and fifty feet. But this gives it only a more romantic air. When you arrive at the bottom, you find yourself in a most magnificent structure. For what purpose designed, or by what art of man contrived, and thus erected in the bowels of the earth, you are at a loss to conceive. The largest cathedral compared to it, is a mole-hill near a mountain. Its arched roof is formed of splendid crystal; and is supported by innumerable rows of pillars composed of the same rich materials. The pavement glitters like glass. Windows it can have none, so deep below the surface. But windows are unnecessary: it is illumined with various lights hung up among the pillars, which being reflected from bright surfaces in every direction, are multiplied into thousands. One may almost speak of them in the language of poetry:

From the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtil magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps, and blazing crescents, fed
 With naphtha, and asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky.

In

In some parts of this superb edifice, the ornaments appear to be Gothic; in others, Grecian: but as you examine it nicely, you find it cannot exactly be reduced to the rules of any order. In short, it appears to be an amazing piece of perspective, constructed in a mode of architecture wholly its own. I am sorry to descend from these lofty ideas by adding, that I have only been describing the salt-pits at Northwich. And yet I have no doubt, but if any one, *unacquainted* with them, should be let down in his sleep, and left to *awake at his leisure*, he would find this description fall short of the first idea that would strike him.

Soon after we leave Northwich, we enter Delamere-forest, which, tho a wild, heathy, country, affords the ground-plot of a noble scene. The parts are large, with many considerable hills, and smaller inequalities. The interfections also among them, are often pleasing. If the whole were woody, as it once probably was, it might afford many beautiful forest-views — roads winding through woods; and lawns interspersed with groves, or bounded by the dark recesses of the forest; the wild

deer every where starting from the brakes, bounding along the plains, grazing in herds, or reposing in groups. If our ancestors smarted under forest-laws, they had at least the compensation of beautiful landscape.

Delamere-forest is a gentle rise through the space of six, or seven miles. Yet gentle as it is, continued through so long a tract, the ascent becomes considerable; and when we approach the end of the forest, we find ourselves mounted on a vast terrace, from whence the eye is carried far, and wide, over a flat country, bounded by the Welsh mountains, under which appear in remote distance, the windings of the Dee, and the towers of Chester. In the middle space stands Beeston-castle, seated proudly on the brow of a hill. Its situation is one of the most impregnable in England. The hill is steep and rocky; opposing all access, but by a single path on the east. Our views of it from the heights of Delamere, shewed it in a more connected, and picturesque form, than when it appears insulated, as it does on a nearer approach. The castle itself, which was built about the year 1200, was equal in strength to the situation it occupies. It was supplied with water by a well, which seems
to





to have been a work of astonishing labour ; having been hewn through at least a hundred yards of solid rock. The castle, tho now in ruins, was strong enough, so late in history as the last civil wars, to undergo two vigorous sieges. It held for the king. The parliament-troops assaulted it during four months ; when they were beaten off by prince Rupert. In the following year it suffered a longer siege, and was at length reduced. Ruined however as it now is, the country-people in it's neighbourhood rest still on a prophecy, that in some future time, Beeston-castle shall be restored, and contribute to save all England. I should add, that some of it's ruins are very picturesque ; especially the grand entrance.

As we approach Chester, the winding of the Dee has a good effect. Ancient towns, like this, are among the noblest records of history. The Romans first distinguished Chester as a military station. Here was posted the legion furnished with *viatrix* ; of which the spade discovers many remains — votive altars, and bricks inscribed with it's name and title. In after ages, king Edgar made it a seat of royal residence. Here

tained. The siege of Mold is mentioned by the Welsh historians, among the most splendid actions of their annals. The bards of the day, made it little inferior to the siege of Troy. But all it's heroical monuments are now lost, together with the names of the heroes, and their gallant atchievements. The *towers* of the castle, and it's very *foundations* are all blended together; and nothing remains of this celebrated object of contention, but a few heaps of earth. The mere site of the castle is all, that can be traced.

We build with what we deem eternal rock ;
 A distant age asks, where the fabric stood ?
 While in the dust, sifted, and searched in vain,
 The undiscoverable secret sleeps.

From Mold the country becomes still wilder. The heights rise into mountains; smooth indeed, and rarely decorated with rock; but steep, and lofty. Some of them we traversed; dipping, at intervals, into little fertile vallies, and mounting again the opposite hills, till at length we came to the heights of Penbarris; from the brow of which, we had a view into the beautiful and extensive vale of Cluyd.

Down

Down the formidable steep of this mountain we descended rapidly into the town of Ruthin, which stands at the bottom of it, and about the middle of the vale.

Every little town in Wales boasts it's antiquities. At Mold we found the *site* of a castle. Here we found the *ruins* of one. Ruthin-castle was the ancient defence of the avenues into the vale of Cluyd, in this part. It's situation is curious. It stands on a rising ground, in a dish of mountains; and if it had ever been in the hands of any chieftain, who had taste in landscape, it might easily, with a little planting on the fore-ground, have been made beautiful, without loss either of strength or dignity.

The vale of Cluyd, which we had now entered, is deservedly celebrated by all travellers. It is chiefly indeed considered as a rich scene of cultivation; but it abounds also with picturesque beauty. It is very extensive; not less than twenty-four miles in length; and six, seven, and sometimes eight, in breadth; and is almost every where skreened by lofty mountains, which are commonly ploughed at the
bottom,

bottom, and pastured at the top, as is common in all rough countries. It was the practice in Virgil's time :

Serunt, & vomere duras
Exercent colles ; atq. horum asperima pascunt.

Within these bold limits the vale forms one large segment of a circle, varied only in different parts by little mountain-recesses, which break the regularity of the sweep. The area of this grand scene is in some parts open, and extended, affording the most amusing distances : in other parts, it is full of little knolls, and hillocks, and thickly planted with wood. The great want it sustains, is that of water. Many little rivulets find their way through it ; particularly the Cluyd, from whence it takes it's name ; but none of them is in any degree equivalent to the scene. The Cluid itself is but a diminutive stream. At one end indeed the vale wants no decoration of this kind, as it opens to the sea. The other end is lost in mountains. About Ruthin the scene is woody ; and continues so, near six miles farther, till we reach Denbigh. Here the view becomes more extensive, and opens towards St. Asaph, upon a wide and spacious flat called

Rhyddland-





Rhyddland-marsh, from a castle of that name, which formerly guarded its confines.

As we approach Denbigh, its castle, seated on the lofty summit of an inclined plane, makes a noble appearance. The hill, on which it stands, is a limestone-rock, and is the more remarkable, as we observed no other rock in the vale.

The castle, which is about a mile in circumference, is broken into so many parts, that, on the spot, no good view can be obtained of the whole together. But many of the parts are beautiful in themselves; particularly the gate of the inner-castle, which is a noble fragment.

The best appearance which the castle of Denbigh makes altogether, is from the *parks*. The ruins there, are picturesque, descending the rock, from the inner-castle, which is the highest part, to the well-tower, which is the lowest. This latter work takes its name from defending a well, at the bottom of the rock, which supplied the garrison with water. Lambert, who came before this castle, in the civil war, found every part so inaccessible, that he
began

began to fear the event; till he was fortunate enough to sap the well-tower, on which the garrison surrendered.

In the castle of Denbigh is a singular ruin, the original intention of which is not very apparent. It is most like a church; and yet unlike any structure of that kind in use. It consists only of one single area. Nothing remains, but walls; in which are nine windows on each side. The length of the building is fifty-seven paces; and the breadth twenty-five. At the east end a good distance opens along the vale, towards St. Asaph.

Denbigh is an inconsiderable town; but the country around it is beautiful, and various. Among the hills are sequestered scenes; while the vale furnishes open views, with distances; and a sea-coast is hard at hand.

The woody scenes of Gwaynynog, the seat of Col. Myddelton, about two miles from Denbigh, are worth visiting. Gwaynynog stands in the middle of a pleasant park: but the beauty of the place is a valley winding behind the house.

The

The pleasing irregularity of this sweet recess, — the several glades into which it opens; and the sequestered scenes with which these glades are often closed — the river, proportioned to the valley — the side-screens variously adorned with wood; and the path judiciously conducted through the whole, are all very beautiful. From the higher grounds the castle of Denbigh makes a good object.

Lleweny, the seat of Sir Lynch Cotton, lies about two miles on the other side of Denbigh; and in a situation very different from that of Gwynnynog. Col. Myddelton's stands on the edge of the vale; and has the advantage of the sinuous parts of one of the hills, which compose it. Lleweny, with a screen of wood behind it, lies at the bottom of the vale, and has a large portion of it in prospect, of which Denbigh-castle is the grand feature*.

* Lleweny was afterwards purchased by Mr. Fitzmorris, brother to the earl of Shelburn, who added a number of buildings to it, and turned it into a bleaching-house. Here he lived with the affected humility of a tradesman, and the pomp of a lord. It is said, he used to travel in his coach and six to Chester, and then sell his cloth behind a counter.

But

But of all the beautiful scenes in this neighbourhood, the valley of Cyffredin pleased us most. It lies about five miles west of Denbigh, upon the banks of the Elway ; which is a considerable river. The high grounds, which lead into it, form also the screen of another valley, which unites with Cyffredin. This valley too is adorned with it's stream, (tho much inferior to the Elway,) and with a variety of wood, and lawn. A little bridge, at the bottom, was a point, from which we had a view of both vallies at once. But the views from the bridge itself, both above and below, solicited most of our attention. That part of this beautiful valley, which winds down the Elway, is formed by a lofty screen of rock on the left, in which the principal feature is a cave ; and by a high woody bank on the right ; but the river taking a short turn, this part of the valley soon winds out of sight. The other part, which runs up the stream, continues at least a mile before the eye : both it's screens are woody, but are not so lofty as those below the bridge. From hence we still pursued our rout up the Elway, as far as Pont-newith ;
where

where another bridge afforded us very beautiful views; both below, and above the stream.

Having spent a long morning among these picturesque scenes, we left them, convinced that if our time had permitted us to follow the river farther, we should have been well rewarded for our labour.



S E C T. III.

FROM Denbigh, we set out for Conway, the isle of Anglesea, and the country about Snowdon.

Our ride was barren, till we came to Pontralcoch. Here we again met the Elway; the banks of which had given us so much entertainment at Cyffredin. At Pontralcoch we found a grand single arch thrown over the river. It stands in the midst of a spacious amphitheatre of woody hills; which form a scene corresponding with it in dignity.

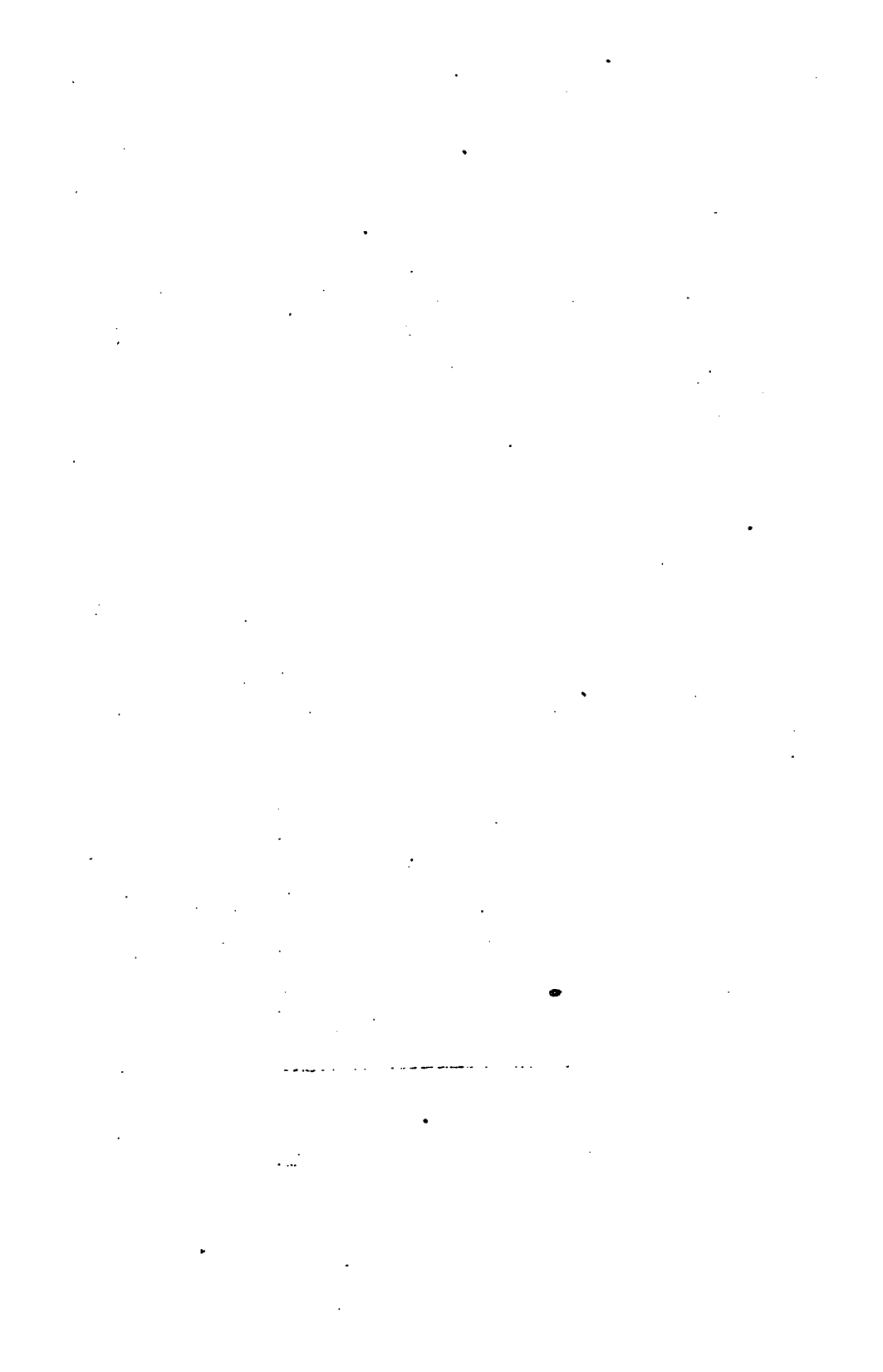
We found other pleasing views, while we continued in the neighbourhood of the Elway; particularly (if I mistake not the name,) at Plâfcoch; where the river dividing into several channels forms a little plain into two or three woody islands; which opening, and intercepting the view by turns, through the trees, made an agreeable shifting scene. This indeed is a

mere miniature: but when the scale is larger, and the materials of more consequence, and well put together, we sometimes see beautiful scenery in this species of landscape. Not far from hence, the Elway joins the Cluyd; and tho it is a stream of much superior value; yet the Cluyd taking a dignity of character from the grandeur of the vale, which it divides, carries the waters of the Elway, under it's own name, into the sea.

As we approach the end of the vale of Cluyd, we see the last hills, which compose it's screens; particularly those on the right, sinking into the extended plain of Rhyddland-marsh. This vast surface was varied with different tints melting into each other; but few objects appeared upon it, which had any distinct form. The tower of St. Afaph was almost singly conspicuous; and a little to the left, the castle of Rhyddland. The marsh spread far and wide in every direction; and beyond all appeared the sea.

As we arrived nearer the close of the vale, the tower of St. Afaph, and Rhyddland-castle took each a higher stand, and formed an agreeable combination with a bridge, which consisted of several arches, and appeared as a
second





second distance. The fore-ground was composed of the Elway, and it's banks.

Our rout did not lead us into St. Afaph; which offered no temptation to carry us out of our way. It is an inconsiderable place.

Here we forlook the vale of Cluyd, and turning to the left, along the great Irish road, we mounted higher grounds. From hence we had a still more extensive view over Rhyddland-marsh; which on one side is bounded by mountains; on the other by the sea. So vast a flat made a good distance, and had it's effect, as we travelled among the woods of a lofty bank, which was every where rough and broken, and made an excellent contrast, as well as a fore-ground. The species of landscape we had before us, is not unlike that described at Coteswold in Gloucestershire, from Crickly-hill*: only from that stand was presented a rich scene — the vale of Severn; and here our distance consisted of a bleak marsh. The marsh, no doubt, composed a less amusing mode of distance than the vale; yet when well inlightened, it was not deficient

* See Observat. on the Wye, p. 7.

in beauty ; and being more simple in it's composition, was grander in it's design.

As we left the confines of Rhyddland-marsh, the sea having now full scope, flowed up to the very base of the high grounds, on which we still travelled ; and formed them into promontories ; some of which were formidable.

“ Around yon cliff, (said a peasant answering some of our inquiries,) runs a narrow road. It will save you two miles riding, The people of the country commonly use it ; but in many places it is fallen in ; and is rather dangerous.” Dangerous indeed it appeared to be. It was a mere shelf, winding round a frightful precipice, and hanging over the sea. It looked like the path of despair. As we surveyed the opening of it into the great road, where we stood, a fellow, who had just passed it, (as if to add credit to the information, we had received,) presented himself on horse-back, between two panniers, singing a Welsh ballad, and driving a cow before him. Habit moulds us all. It is not the road, that is in itself frightful ; for then the peasant would have been as much terrified as we were. It is the imagination that takes the alarm. Quiet the imagination by a little habit, and the road becomes





becomes easy. — The name of this place was Penmanbach.

Here we deserted the great road, and turning more towards the sea-coast, we viewed the shores as far as the promontory of Llandidno. We found a wild mountainous country; two or three beautiful bays; and here and there a good mountain scene; but nothing, which greatly engaged our attention.

The promontory of Llandidno was famous in the days of our ancestors, for producing that species of hawk, called the *peregrine falcon*. This falcon is one of the *long-winged* kind; among which he is the swiftest, the most courageous, and the most docile. His prey is commonly the hern, or some other bird that rises aloft in the air. The falcon mounts after him; and endeavours to rise above him, which the swiftness of his wing enables him to do. When he has him thus at advantage, he strikes down upon him with his talons; and the falconer's amusement lies first in seeing the pursuer, and his prey, mount into the air, till they are lost as specks in the clouds; and then in watching their descent. We had not the pleasure of seeing any of these *generous* birds, as they are called, between whose ancestors,

and ours, existed formerly so great an intimacy. We surveyed however their ancient castles, and the district around them; nor must I omit to add, what is generally mentioned both in the history of Llandidno, and of the falcon, that a letter is still extant from the Lord treasurer Burleigh, to one of the Mostyns, lords of this country, thanking him for a very fine cast of hawks from the rocks of Llandidno,





S E C T. IV.

FROM the desolate, but amusing coast of Llandidno, we pursued our way to Conway, through kindred scenes, wild, rough, and picturesque.

The castle of Conway, with the scenery about it, is supposed to afford one of the grandest views in Wales : and in some measure it deserves it's reputation. As we stood opposite to it, at the Ferry-house, a noble bay, at least half a mile broad, lay before us, formed by the tide entering the river Conway. This bay winds into the country : on the left, losing nothing of its dimensions, while it continues in sight. On the right it stretches to the sea : but the opening is so much closed by promontories, and reaches of low-land, that the idea of the sea is nearly excluded ; which is rather a circumstance of advantage. Had the sea appeared in it's grandeur, the consequence of the bay had

been diminished. On the opposite side of the bay, on a knoll, which forms a sort of little peninsular promontory, stands the castle of Conway, fully equal in grandeur to the scene; and beyond the castle, rises a woody bank, as a back-ground; whose ample parts, and furniture correspond also with the objects around.

Here then are all the ingredients of a sublime, and beautiful landscape. — Water, rising ground, woody banks, and a castle, all of grand dimensions. And yet the picture is but an indifferent one. The case is, the composition is incorrect. The castle is formal, displaying a number of regular towers, and turrets; the bank beyond it, tho woody, is heavy, and lumpish; the lines have no variety, and there is still a nakedness about the whole, which is displeasing.

The best expedient to preserve truth in a view from the Ferry, and yet to add as much composition as the natural arrangement of the materials will allow, is to introduce only a part of the castle near the corner of the picture; which would ease it of some of its regular towers: and to cut down part of the wood on the opposite bank, which would remove, in some degree, its heaviness. As the wood, in fact,

fact, *is* periodically cut down, this liberty is very allowable. The picture might be improved also by planting a tree or two on the fore-ground; and hiding part of the regularity by their branches *. As we approach the castle in the ferry-boat, the point of view of course frequently varies, and often for the better: but in *every* point there is a barrenness, and uniformity, which are displeasing.

The art of constructing castles in landscape; and of adapting landscape to castles, is rarely exemplified in the *living scene*. Some castles are more picturesque in their form, and situation than others; and some part almost of every castle may be picturesque. But with regard to the whole, we seldom see any castle, however meliorated by age, and improved by ruin, which can, in all respects, be called a complete model. — This castle certainly is not.

The picturesque advantages, which a castle; or any eminent building, receives from a *state of ruin*, are chiefly these.

* See vol. i. p. 9. of the *Forest-scenery*, when withered trees are made use of for this purpose: but it may be answered by flourishing trees, if they are judiciously used, and proportioned to the use.

It gains irregularity in it's *general form*. We judge of beauty in castles, as we do in figures, in mountains, and other objects. The solid, square, heavy form, we dislike; and are pleased with the pyramidal one, which may be infinitely varied; and which ruin contributes to vary.

Secondly, a pile gains from a state of ruin, an irregularity in it's *parts*. The cornice, the window, the arch, and battlement, which in their original form are all regular, receive from ruin a variety of little irregularities, which the eye examines with renewed delight.

Lastly, a pile in a state of ruin receives the richest decorations from the various colours, which it acquires from time. It receives the stains of weather; the incrustations of moss; and the varied tints of flowering weeds. The Gothic window is hung with festoons of ivy; the arch with pendent wreaths streaming from each broken coigne; and the summit of the wall is planted with little twisting bushes, which fill up the square corners; and contribute still more to break the lines,

In these sources of beauty the castle of Conway is too deficient. It's parts indeed are shattered: but it is too intire to produce a
good

Ruin illustrated with regard to its general form.

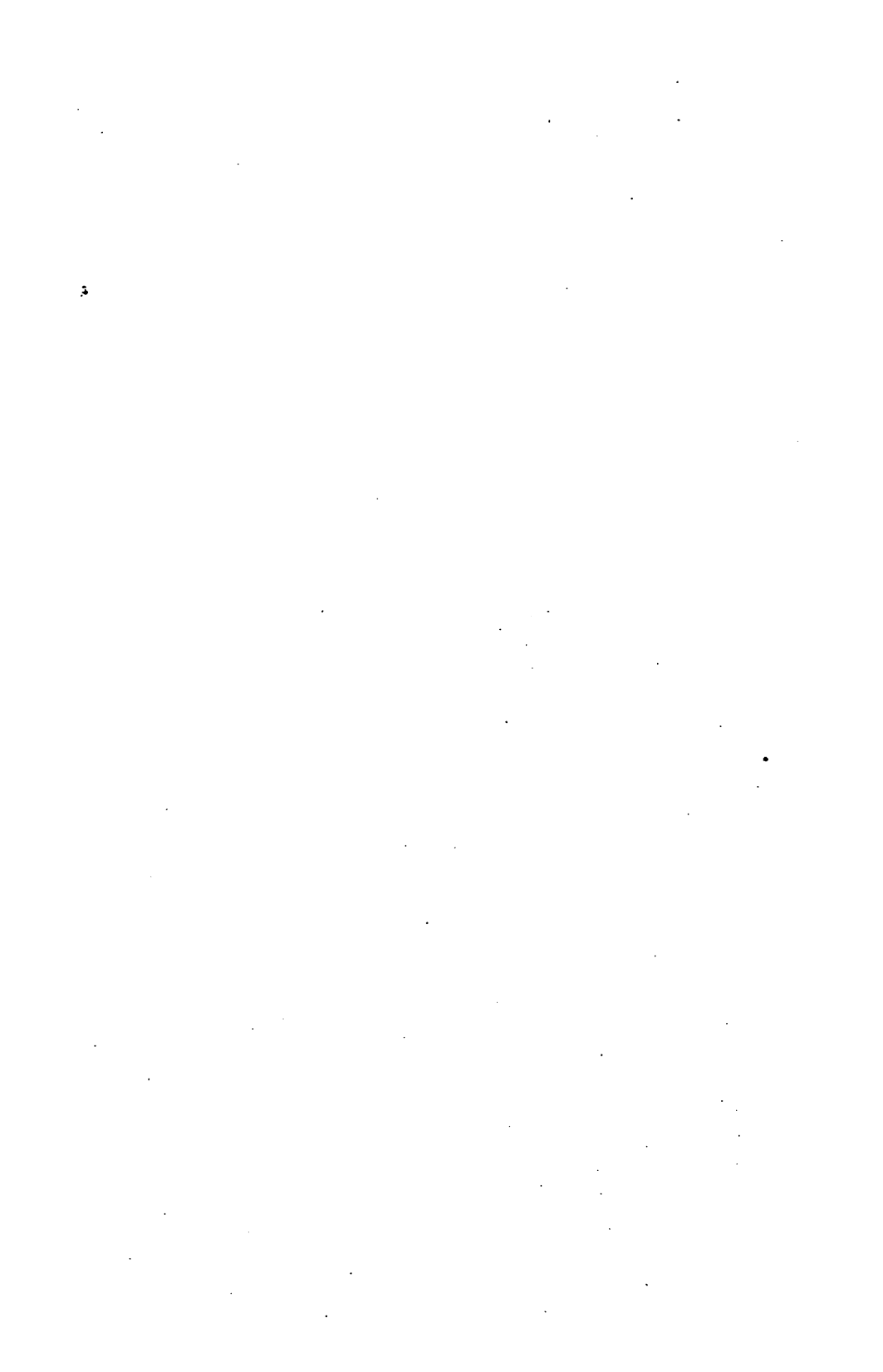


_____ with regard to its parts.



_____ with regard to Decorations.





good picturesque whole: and it is very little adorned with vegetable furniture.

As we got into the middle of the stream, in our approach to Conway, we had not only a varied view of the castle; but of the noble river we navigated. This stream, like a person, suddenly raised to a great fortune, increases at once from a spring to a river. The Conway runs only twenty-four miles; just the breadth of the two counties of Denbigh and Carnarvon, which it divides: and yet, tho its course is so short, it receives such vast increase from the various streams, which the surrounding mountains pour into it, that it is navigable almost to its fountain head. We regretted much that we could not navigate it as far as Llanrwst; where the woods, and rocks, and sweeping mountains, we were assured, were equal to any thing we could see in Wales; but our time would not permit us to see more of it than we could see from the ferry. In this river was formerly carried on a pearl-fish which is said to have been valuable. pearls were found in large muscles. sent, no such business is followed.

indeed a number of people boiling muscles, on the banks of another river in the neighbourhood: but they were in quest only of those small pearls, which are sold to the apothecaries, for what they call *crab's eyes*.

Having crossed the ferry, we landed under the walls of the castle. Castles are commonly the appendages of towns: here the town seems a mere appendage to the castle. We were received at our inn, as we were at all the more considerable inns on the road, by a harper, who is commonly blind. His infirmity is probably the cause of his being appointed to the office of welcoming strangers into the town. These venerable substitutes of the ancient Cambrian bards, are often respectable figures. Their harps have an elegant form; and if their music is not exquisite, their appearance is picturesque.





S E C T. V.

THE retrospect through the gate, as we leave Conway, affords a pleasing view of ruin ; composed of battlements, and towers.

Here we met again the great Irish road ; and were conducted above a mile from the town, between walls, clumsily formed, of a very beautiful kind of marbled stone. I know not how far it is fitted for masonry ; but if it were properly disposed, it would give great richness to a building.

As we approach Penmanmawr, the country grows wilder ; and some of the heights tremendous. At Succinant the precipices of the road have rather a frightful appearance. From all these heights we see different parts of the sea-coast, at a distance ; — the promontorial parts of the country, with the islands by turns — Anglesea, Priest-holm, or Puffin's isle — great, and little Orm's head, (the former of which

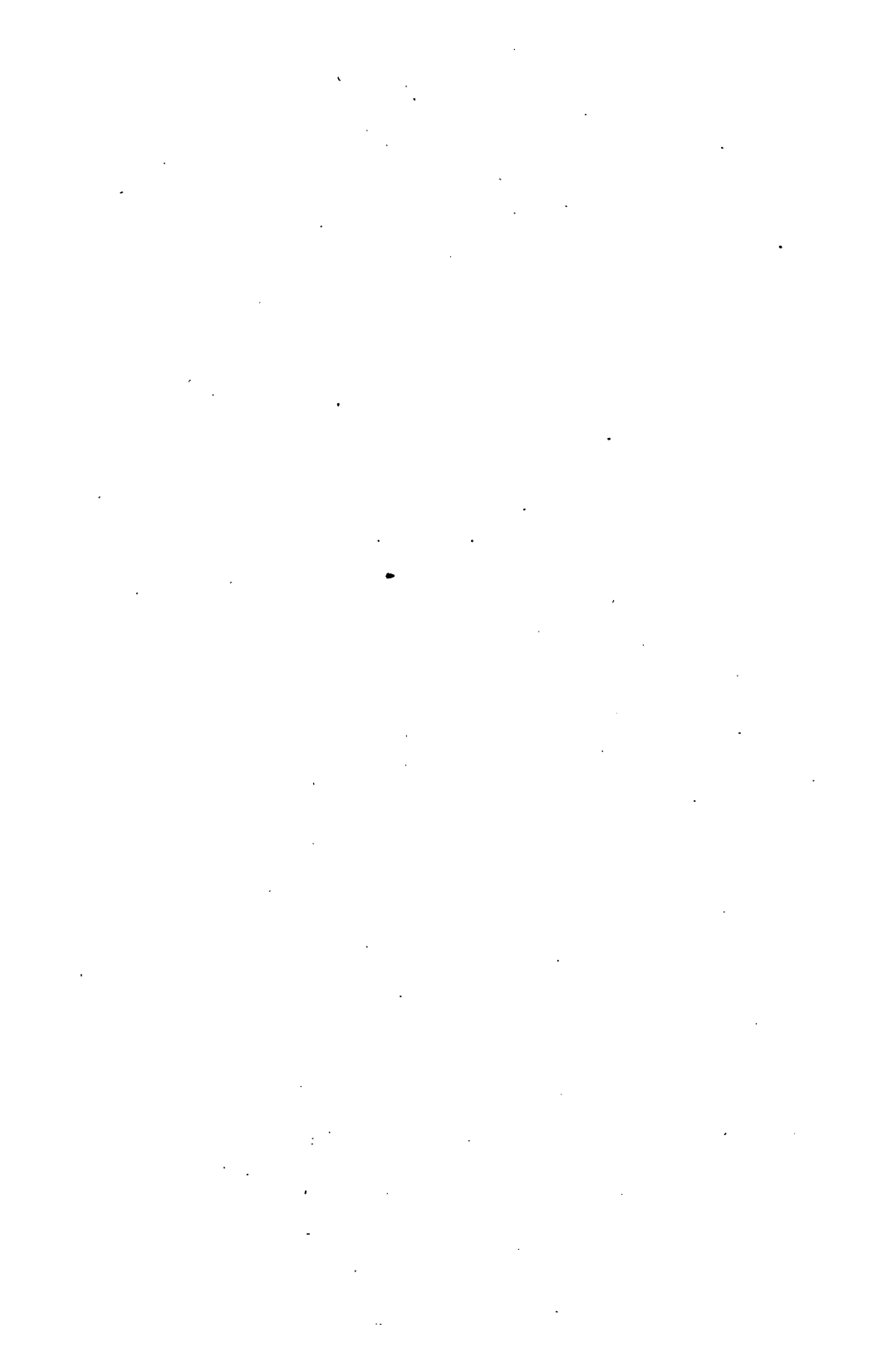
which has the appearance of an island), and all the projecting lands in their neighbourhood. The little vallies, and recesses among the mountains, which we now traversed, were very beautiful. Abr, in particular, is a pleasant, woody recess, looking to the sea, and secured on every other side by lofty barriers.

At the distance of two or three miles, we had the first grand view of Penmanmawr; an immense rocky mountain, projecting into the sea, with the isle of Anglesea as a distance. It has no variety of line; but is one heavy, lumpish form, falling plumb into the water, without any of those little projections from it's base, which let a promontory down gently, as by a step; and which are, in general, great sources of beauty, as they prevent heaviness; and add variety *. But here, as the scene is *merely grand*, without being at all indebted to beauty, this lumpish appearance as more simple, tends more strongly to impress the grandeur of the scene.

Round the lower regions of Penmanmawr the road appears, at a distance, winding like a

* See vol. ii. p. 55, of Observations on the lakes and mountains of Cumberland, &c.





narrow shelf: but as we approach, we find it a noble terrace, defended by two good parapet-walls; one securing it from the sea below, and the other from the falling of the rocks above. The situation too of the road took a new form, as we arrived on the spot. Instead of appearing, as it did at a distance, to run along the bottom of the mountain, it now overlooked a tremendous precipice. — Formerly indeed this road was in *reality*, what it *appears at a distance*, a mere shelf, narrow, and without a parapet: and it was with great labour brought to its present state of perfection. The shivering face of the mountain was too unstable to work on; and the road, where it doubles the point, is formed upon vast solid arches; which make it a very curious piece of masonry.

Awful however as the scene is *below*, the mountain *above* presents a still more horrid idea. It has a hideous appearance. One uniform dreary aspect prevails over the whole body of it. There are no large parts; no projecting masses of broken rock, nor beautiful interlacing of soil, herbage, and wood; the whole is covered with one universal face of small shivering, fl rock; as if a mass of these materials had

th

thrown together into one immense heap. The poet's idea of it is strictly geographical when he speaks of

The rude rocks
Of Penmanmawr, heaped hideous to the sky.

So little of any kind of verdure appears on its surface, that we wondered what could tempt the wild goats, which clung about it, to climb its heights.

We were told a story * of an intrepid genius, who, riding a vicious horse along this road, before the parapet was made, took it into his head to teach the beast in this place to stand fire. With this intention he turned him suddenly round, and brought his head over the edge of the precipice. As he stood trembling in that position, the rider drew a pistol from his holster, and poising it close to the ears of the horse, fired it off. The greater terror overpowered the less; and the horse stood unmoved, except by one universal tremor, which shook his frame. The rider escaped the mischief his rashness deserved: but

* We had this relation from Mr. Brisco, a very worthy gentleman, the Collector of the customs at Beaumaris.

supposing

supposing he had now gained his end, he repeated the experiment an hour after on the plain below; but his horse, having now no counter-terror to contend with, broke away from all restraint, and threw his rider, who was killed on the spot.

That every part of Penmanmawr may be a scene of immensity, on it's summit stood formerly a castle, equal in grandeur to the mountain, which is it's base. In the ruins, it's vestiges, and numerous towers, may yet be traced. It's situation so lofty, and inaccessible, — it's extent — and it's strength, are all equally astonishing. It is thought to have been capable of holding twenty thousand men; tho the steep avenues leading to it, are such, that a hundred might have defended it against any number. But it is probable, it was meant rather as an asylum to the country, than as a fortress against an enemy.



S E C T. VI.

AT the bottom of Penmanmawr, the scene shifted; the mountains receded; and we were presented with a spacious view of the Lavan-fands; and of the isle of Anglesea stretching wide beyond them. The great Irish road turns short to the left; winds along the edge of the fands, under the mountains, and near Bangor crosses the Menai; which is the channel, that separates Anglesea from the main.

As a nearer and pleasanter rout to Beaumaris, which was our next stage, we crossed the fands. They extend about five miles; and we steered over them by fixed poles, set up as marks to avoid quick-fands. As we approached the middle of this vast area, it

assumed a circular form, nearly indeed it's natural one; and the country, which invironed it's skirts, afforded a very noble piece of scenery. There is something peculiarly grand in these great amphitheatres of nature; where the eye, stationed in a center, especially if that center be on a spacious plain, and viewing a profusion of grand objects on every side, passes along mountains, vallies, rivers, towns, forests, islands, and promontories, in succeffion; contrasting one part with another; and every part, with the level area, which forms the fore-ground. The area of the amphitheatre before us, had now also an adventitious beauty. It was filled with people from the country gathering shell-fish, which is their common practice, on the retreat of the tide. Many of them had carts, and horses with panniers, which formed a number of little groups upon the sand; and made it a moving, and very amusing picture.

The objects, which compose this grand circle around the sands, taken in rotation, as they present themselves, are the promontory of Orm's-head standing out into the sea; and adjoining to it, on the right, the mountains of Penmanmawr, and Penmanbach, which

we

we had just left. From these runs a skirting of rich country, (*rich* in a picturesque light), formed into a recess by mountains; one of which delving into a peculiar abyss, is known by the name of the *Devil's-cauldron*. To this country succeeds, in the part opposite the sea, another rich scene. At the point of it lies Bangor, screened by a woody distance, running out behind it. From thence the isle of Anglesea appears still farther distant; winding round like a long, low bank, towards the sea. Separated by a narrow channel from Anglesea rises Priest-holm, or Puffin's island; which another small channel divides from Orm's-head, from whence our view began. In this grand circle, the semi-diameter of which may be from six to ten miles, no part possesses peculiar beauty; yet the whole together is pleasing; and many pictures might be made from different portions of it: at least many excellent hints might be taken.

But if the forms of the objects are not quite correct, as indeed we rarely see in nature examples of good composition, yet in colouring, and light and shade, the whole range of the circling scenery, when we saw it, was tra

scendent. The woods, and hills of Bangor, which arose full opposite to the setting sun, and all the isle of Anglesea, which received its beams aslant, were spread with vivid light; with tints and colours of great variety, tho always harmonious: while the mountains, on the opposite side, were in deep shadow. Here and there a prominent point was tipped with splendor; and a few straggling rays, diverging along some mountain's side, would spread a kind of hazy light upon the valley beneath. In the mean time the chastified tint of so vast an area of sand was a pleasing contrast to all this radiance. — Something magical possesses a picturesque eye within such a circle of great objects; and if there had not been with us one or two of cooler imagination, who intimated, that the tide was approaching, there might have been some danger of our delaying, till we had been intangled by it — a case, which has sometimes happened to inadvertent travellers.

As we approached Anglesea, the town of Beaumaris, touched with the last ray of a parting sun, made a distinct appearance; and beyond it Lord Bulkley's woods were in shadow.

dow. Puffin's-island was now hid; and a stretch of sand appeared to run out as far as Orm's-head. Soon after, we came to the channel of the Menai, over which we ferried, and were landed on a pebble beach, close to Beaumaris.

has very much the air of truth, I shall give a translation of it.

“ In the year 813 the castle of Treganway was burnt by lightning; and in the year 823 it was re-built. It was afterwards reduced by the Saxons, and destroyed. This castle stood within the present flood-mark, opposite to Penmanbach; and the road from Rhyddland-castle passed through it, by the boundary-stone, near those two rocks, which are called the *Brown-brothers*. These rocks make a part of the promontory of Llandidno, and stood opposite to the castle of Treganway. From hence the road ran in a strait line to the palace of Elis Clynog, which lay about a mile from Priest-holm island. This palace once commanded a very beautiful vale, now totally flooded; and known by the name of the Lavan-fands. For about the time when the castle of Treganway was destroyed by the Saxons, the sea broke in upon this country, and overflowed all the lands of the vale, which became a sand-beach, and took the name of *Lavan*, or *lamentation*, from the melancholy cries of it's suffering inhabitants. It is said that two persons only escaped from the palace of Elis Clynog.”

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S E C T. VII.

IT is a commonly received opinion, in these parts of Wales, that the whole track of sand, over which we had just passed, was once a beautiful valley; and that Anglesea was separated from Carnarvonshire in this part, as well as in others, only by the straits of Menai. It is one of those traditionary stories, which seems founded on truth: and indeed the very name of Beaumaris, or the *beautiful marsh*, seems to indicate a situation, which that town once had, and which now it certainly has not.

In confirmation of this tradition a clergyman of those parts * shewed us, among other Welsh MSS. an account of the breaking in of the sea upon this country. As the narrative

* Mr. Myddelton, rector of St. George's near Denbigh.

has



and fail up the channel of the Menai, as far as Carnarvon-bay; the banks of which channel, we were informed from all hands, would continue beautiful throughout: and from Carnarvon we proposed to explore the regions of Snowdon. But when we talked, on the subject of our intended navigation, with the learned in winds, and tides, we were informed, that unless both were favourable, the voyage, trifling as it appears, might be attended with danger. Even this little channel, we found, had it's Sylla, and Charybdis, to threaten inadvertent voyagers; and as neither wind nor tide favoured our purpose, we gave it up.

on the fore-grounds. This mode indeed of viewing portions of landscape between the boles of trees is pleasing. The quick glance also of moving objects in those circumstances, is attended with amusement. We enjoy it the more, as we are eager to catch it before it is gone. " Beyond that meadow, (says Mr. Gray, in a letter to Mr. Nicholls,) nods a thicket of oaks, that mask the buildings, and leave on either hand an opening to the blue glittering sea. Did you not observe how that white sail shot by, and was lost ?"—Virgil too, describing a fleet entering a river, seizes the same image; and gives his ships a more picturesque appearance, by presenting them through the interstices, and obscurity of the grove:

Ut celsas vidère rates, atq. inter opacum
Allabi nemus. —————

On leaving the woods of Penthryn, we entered a wild, disagreeable country, with mountains on the left, towards which we verged. But we met nothing among them worth our notice. They are in general, so uncouthly shaped, and so inharmoniously combined, that we were scarce rewarded with a single mountain-scene of any value. All this wild country

try passes under the name of the *Forest of Snowdon*.

Through many a yielding bog, and over many a dreary mountain we travelled :

Per rupes, scopulosque, adituque carentia faxa ;
Quâ via difficilis ; quâque est via nulla. —

In few places we could ride ; and where we could not, a servant was of no use in leading our horses ; for every one was obliged to lead his own ; which was a great inconvenience to those, who had sketches, and observations to make.

In fact, Snowdon is a collection of mountains, formed on the old gigantic plan of heap-
ing mountain on mountain. You are kept in continual suspense. After ascending much rising ground, you climb the steep side of a precipice still higher. This, you think surely must be the summit of Snowdon. You are mistaken. Another steep ridge rises before you : and thus you ascend, as it were by stairs, the several stories of the mountain.

These scenes, the Cambro-Briton reverences as the last retreat of Llewelin from the pow of Edward. If that persecuted prince trusted more in these scenes, than in his

proweſs, he might have remained unconquered ; but he deſcended with his army into the plain, and was ruined.

At length we arrived at the foot of, what ſeemed now, without doubt, to be the higheſt ridge of Snowdon ; from whence we had a fair view of what we conceived to be it's real ſummit. The day was clear ; and the mountain unincumbered with clouds. Pauſing a while on this eminence, and looking down on the parts of the mountain we had paſſed, it made, on the whole, no very formidable appearance. The Welch call Snowdon about twelve hundred yards high ; but they meaſure from the level of the ſea ; and as the country, we have ſeen, aſcends gradually many miles towards the ſummit, there remains no great quantity of precipitate height for, what is properly called, the *mountain* to appropriate. The geography therefore of Matthew of Weſtminſter is not ſo very erroneous, as ſome have imagined, when he tells us, that Conway-caſtle lies at the foot of Snowdon ; tho in fact it lies twenty miles from the ſummit, which is commonly known by that name.

Tho we had thus aſcended ſo nearly the end of our journey, we felt but little inclination to
aſcend

ascend higher. Indeed it was too late in the day; for tho the summit of Snowdon appeared so near, we doubted not, from past experience, but we had many a weary step to take before we attained it. Whether there was a road for a horse we knew not; but we were very sure, we should find no refreshment, of which both we, and our horses, began to be in great want. —Instead therefore of ascending the summit of Snowdon, we contented ourselves with surveying the fertility of all the little vallies, and recesses, at our feet, which seemed luxuriant on every side. The Welsh indeed say, that this single mountain, (including, I suppose, all its appendages,) would find summer-pasturage for all the cattle in Wales.



S E C T. IX.

AS I cannot present the reader with any view of my own from the summit of Snowdon, I shall present him with one, extracted from an account given by Mr. Pennant, who ascended it to see the sun rise from so noble a center; and has collected a great variety of picturesque images, from which I shall select some of the most interesting.

The night was remarkable fine, and starry. Towards morning the stars fading away, left a short interval of darkness; which was soon dispersed by the dawn of day. The body of the sun appeared to rise like the moon without rays; but soon the sea, which extended on the west, began to glow with red. The prospect however disclosed gradually, as the mist, which enveloped the mountain, subsided. The perpendicular view furnished horrid ideas. "We looked down, (says he,) into numerous abysses,

which were concealed by eddies of vapour, like thick smoke, furiously circulating in a kind of rapid whirl-pools. Often, a gust of wind, making an opening in the clouds, gave us a vista towards some lake, or valley: and often the clouds, opening in various places at once, exhibited strange appearances of waters, rocks, and chafms. Then at once they would close; and leave us involved in darkness. Separating again, they would fly off in wild eddies round the middle of the mountain, and expose in part both it's summit, and it's base. As we descended from this various scene, a thunder-storm overtook us, before we reached our horses. It's rolling among the mountains was inexpressibly awful. The rain was heavy. We mounted our horses, and gained the bottom with some hazard. The little rills, which on our ascent, trickled down the sides of the mountain, were now swelled into torrents; and some of them appeared dangerous."

Having thus taken a view of Snowdon, if the reader will follow me to mount Lebanon, I will present him with a still grander view. The comparison of similar scenes, or of Nature's mode of *diversifying landscape* on the *same plan*, is among the most amusing topics of
of

of picturesque observation. — I met with the account here given of Lebanon in Volney's travels into Egypt, and Syria; from which I take, as I did from Mr. Pennant, a few of such passages, as appeared to me most descriptive, and picturesque.

“Lebanon gives it's name to an extensive chain of mountains, inhabited by the Druzes; who enjoy among it's fastnesses some degree of liberty, amidst those vast territories, which are subject to Turkish tyranny. When you land on this coast, the loftiness, and steep ascent of this mountainous ridge, which seems to inclose the whole country, inspires you with astonishment, and awe. If you climb it in any part, the wide extended space at the top, becomes a fresh object of admiration. But to enjoy in perfection this majestic scene, you must ascend that summit of Lebanon, which is called *Sannin*. There on every side you see an horizon almost without bounds. In clear weather, the sight is lost over the deserts of Arabia, which extend to the Persian gulph. In another direction, you survey the sea, which washes the coast of Europe: and in a third, you look over the successive chains of mountains, which carry the eye, at least

imagination, as far as to Antioch. You seem to command the whole world ; till the wandering eye, sated with surveying remote objects, turns at length to those, which are more within it's scope. It looks down on the vast profundity of the diminished coast lying below. It examines the rocks, woods, torrents, and declivities of the mountain. It examines the various vallies, often obscured by floating clouds ; while the swelling bases of the mountain, which on landing at the bottom appeared so magnificent, appear now only like the furrows of a field. In the mean time, if you hear thunder ; instead of bursting above you, it now rolls below.

“ If the traveller leave his lofty stand, and visit the interior parts of these mountains, the ruggedness of his path, the steepness of the descent, and the height of the precipices strike him with terror : but by degrees he begins to have confidence in the sagacity, and certain foot-steps of his mule ; and examines, at his ease, those grand, and picturesque scenes, which succeed each other. He sees villages ready to glide from the declivities, on which they stand : convents hanging on solitary eminences, as if nothing could come near them :
rocks

rocks perforated by torrents, and formed into natural arches ; or worn perpendicularly, and resembling lofty walls. But these picturesque circumstances are often the occasion of very tragical events. Rocks lose their equilibrium, and rolling down on the adjacent houses, bury the inhabitants. Such an event, about twenty years ago, overwhelmed a whole village. And still more lately, the whole side of a hill, covered with vines, and mulberries, was detached by a sudden thaw ; and sliding down the side of a mountain, was launched like a ship from the stocks, into the valley beneath."



S E C T. X.

WE now return to Snowdon. What mount Lebanon may be in a *picturesque light*, I know not. Volney indeed speaks of many picturesque passages in it's wide regions: but this matter depends intirely on Volney's taste. With regard to Snowdon, however, I fear, not much can be said. As it no where appears connected enough as *one whole* to form a *grand object*; so neither has it any of those accompaniments, which form a *beautiful* one.

It is a bleak, dreary waste; without any pleasing combination of parts, or any rich furniture, either of wood, or well-constructed rock. The elegant bard therefore who sang,

— what solemn scenes on Snowdon's heights
Descending slow, their glittering skirts unrolled,

did well in fixing his vision on a base, where the eye had nothing else to engage it's attention.

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Our trouble however in traversing this rugged country was not totally unrewarded. Tho Snowdon itself afforded us little amusement, we met with two or three beautiful scenes about Dolbaddern-castle, which lies at it's foot; and is one of those fortresses, built by Edward the first, to guard this avenue into the country. The castle appeared before us, at the distance of two miles, standing on the confines of a lake. The mountains around it, (which are called all appendages of Snowdon), fall into pleasing lines, forming a deep valley, and folding over each other in easy interfections. Indeed a body of water among mountains, if it have no other use, has at least that of shewing, by the little bays it forms, how one mountain folds over another; which strengthens the picturesque idea of a *graduating distance*.

As we descended towards the castle, we were drawn aside by a pleasant retreat called Com-brunog; where a little river flows through two circular vallies, each about a mile in circumference; and each surrounded with mountains. Both areas being nearly plains, and on different levels, the river, having passed through one, falls in a cascade into the other. The whole





whole scenery is embellished with wood ; which is here the more striking, as it is in general, but thinly scattered in these regions.

As we left Combrunog, and descended still nearer Dolbaddern, the scenery about it became more interesting. But as we had before the difficulties of ascent, they were now changed into those of descent. In one place we descended near a hundred stone-steps, or rather stones laid irregularly in the form of steps : and if our horses had not been those of the country, we should not easily have persuaded them to attempt a passage, so ill-adapted to quadrupeds. Through these, and other little difficulties, at length however we arrived at the bottom, where we found two lakes separated by a neck of land ; near which arose a knoll, much higher than the banks of the lakes, but inconsiderable when compared with the surrounding mountains. On this knoll stands the castle, which has never been a capital fortress ; and now exhibits little more, than one round, solitary tower : but it is a very picturesque fragment, and is more in union with the scene, than if it had been a larger building. A lonely tower is itself an emblem of solitude. — Having ascended the
castle-

castle-hill, we had a good view of both the lakes.

The lower one is about two miles long, and half a quarter of a mile broad. It's lines are beautiful; and it goes off, in good perspective; but it has a contracted appearance, being sunk too much, like a gully, under lofty mountains, to which it is in no degree equivalent. In every lake-view the water and skreens should be proportioned, or there can be no very pleasing effect. In the lakes of Constance, and Geneva, and still more in the great lakes of America, the skreens are as little proportioned to the water, as in such a lake as this; the water is to it's skreens. In neither case the scenery is compleat.

The upper lake of Dolbaddern is still more a gully, than the lower, having scarce any banks, but mountains. Both lakes have a naked, desolate appearance; being wholly destitute of furniture. In Cumberland, and Westmorland, such lakes would attract no attention. Here, a dearth of objects gives them consequence.

The upper lake however afforded an opportunity of observing the singular use of *reflections in uniting land and water*. In some parts
the





the rough shores of the lake being fully reflected, occasioned that pleasing ambiguity, which left a doubt where the land ended, and where the water began. In other parts, when the reflections were not so highly coloured, the separation was more distinct; and the reflections gave an easy transition from one element to the other. In some places we observed a dark surface of water urging against a light shore, without any of those mediating tints, which reflections produce. This is unpleasing, and the painter will be cautious how he imitates it, tho he may plead the authority of nature. It is not often however that we see these harsh connections between land and water: and in representation they may easily be softened by a small degree of tint, or shadow.

It was now a late evening hour, and tho we had seen little, we had laboured much; and began to want refreshment, both for ourselves, and horses. Among the mountains of Cumberland we might generally have found it; but here all was desolation. We did not meet with a single village, and but few separate houses; and these were locked up, and the inhabitants gone with their cattle, as we were informed, to the higher parts of the mount

where they spend their summers in little dairies. Here they enjoy a cooler climate, and find fresher pasture for their herds, and flocks. It was too late however to investigate their haunts. The limpid rills of Snowdon were our only repast; to which a biscuit, or crust of bread, would have been an acceptable addition: but we had been improvident. We returned through the same sort of wild country which we had passed in the morning; and spent with hunger and fatigue, discovered at a distance, through the shades of evening, the towers of Carnarvon, with that kind of joy, with which seamen, after a rough voyage, discover a beacon.

CARNARVON is so beautiful a town, and its situation so pleasing, that we were surprized we had never heard it particularly admired. It stands on a bay of the Menai; and on the land side, is washed by the river Saint. It is small, but well built; walled round, embellished with elegant walks, has a noble castle; and a good approach. The castle has the grandest appearance of any castle we have seen in Wales. Its front is rich, and magnificent; but when we enter it, we find it is not built on so large a scale, as we were led to expect, from the grandeur of the gate. The whole structure has more the air of a royal habitation, than of a fortress; and is so perfect, that it might easily be repaired. Our frugal ancestors were sparing of light: the apartments therefore of these grand mansions are commonly dark; tho their proportions are

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often,

often elegant. One end of this castle, (where the Eagle-tower stands,) overlooks the Menai; the other end surveys a winding creek, where the vessels of these narrow seas lie safely, and picturesquely, between two woody hills in a bottom; which is a beautiful valley, when the tide ebbs, and a beautiful lake, when it flows.

The very pleasing situation of this town probably determined Edward the first in chusing it for the birth-place of his son. The chamber is still shewn, where the first English prince of Wales was born; and a window on the opposite side of the castle, from which, tradition says, the queen escaped with her infant son. This is a piece of secret history, intimating, what I think none of our public accounts assert, the intention of the Welsh to detain him.

From Carnarvon we took our rout, along the banks of the Menai, which fully answered our expectations, and afforded us many beautiful views — more beautiful perhaps than if we had navigated the straits, as we at first intended. The eye, when stationed upon the
water,

water, is so low, that unless the banks of the river are uncommonly high, the scenery is lost. The banks of the Wye in Herefordshire, are so lofty, that, in most places, the river, and it's appendages, are seen to more advantage from the bottom, than from the top. But the country about the Menai, is in general, of a moderate height, and affords almost every where, a good point of view; as it commands reaches, and windings of the river, which could not be seen with equal advantage from the surface. The island of Anglesea, on the other side of the channel, has generally a good effect; particularly about Sir Nicolas Baily's * where the woods afford beautiful scenery.

The views of the Menai may be seen with advantage, either when the tide is high or low. The latter circumstance, I should suppose, might be more adapted to them; as the high-water mark, gives a great variation to the winding of the beach.

The cattle, which are bred in great numbers in Anglesea, and afford a great supply to the English markets, are driven in large herds

* Now Lord Uxbridge.

upon a point of low land, which runs into the Menai. Here, instead of being ferried over, they are forced, at the balance of the tide, into the channel, over which they swim into Carnarvonshire; a boat attending on each side of the swimming drove, to prevent accidents, and direct it's motion.

Bangor lies at the mouth of the Menai, near it's opening to the Lavan sands. It is an insignificant town; but some of the views around it are not unpleasant. One in particular we had, in which the tower of the church appeared to advantage, between woody hills, with a distant view of Anglesea, and the town of Beaumaris,

Having thus performed our expedition to Anglesea, Snowdon, and Carnarvon, we returned to Denbigh; having left part of our company there, who did not choose to encounter so rough a march.

S E C T. XII.

FROM Denbigh we pursued our rout along the vale of Cluydd, with which we were already acquainted, as far as Ruthin. There, instead of mounting the steeps of Penbarris*, which we had before descended, we continued in the vale to the end of it; and completed our view of that rich, and beautiful scene.

As we leave Ruthin, the mountains which form the vale, retire into frequent recesses. Their tops are commonly smooth; their bases woody. But their shapes and lines are greatly varied, tho the vale itself makes only one large curve: just as the general form of a vista, cut through a forest, is every where partially broken by the various shapes, growth, age, or situation of the several trees, which compose it.

* See page 114.

As we approach the end of the vale, having passed through a space of more than twenty miles, the mountains draw nearer, till they insensibly close it up; finishing the whole in a noble bay of cultivation. Having ascended the higher grounds, we had a grand retrospect of the whole vale in one vast scene. It's bosom, interspersed with lawns, cottages, and groves, appears winding in perspective between the hills, till every form is lost in an expanse of woody distance; while the hills, on each side, take the several lines which distance gives, one after another, as they retire; till at St. Asaph, the whole landscape unites insensibly with the sea. In a clear day, the castle of Denbigh, the tower of St. Asaph, and various other objects of the vale, if the light fall happily upon them, might probably enrich the view. But when we saw it, all was lightly obscured by a thin azure tint, which could not well be called mist, but threw a slight degree of obscurity over the face of the landscape. Each mode of atmosphere hath it's peculiar beauty, and it is difficult to say, which is more picturesque. One gives *clearness*; the other *softness*; the former, a greater *scope to the eye*, the latter to the *imagination*.

As we leave the vale of Cluydd, we enter a disagreeable country; and had an unpleasant morning's ride among wastes, and open commons on our way to Llangollen. We travelled many miles on high grounds, till we came at length, without any sudden rise, to a precipitate descent; which, in the course of a rapid mile, let us down into the vale of Crucis, a sweet recess; which made us some amends for the uninteresting country we had passed. The ruins of Abbey Crucis, which gives name to the vale, stand at one end of a flat meadow, about a mile in length, and a quarter of a mile in breadth. It is bounded on one side by a mountain-ridge, with little variety of line, save what it receives from a few oaks, straggling about its summit, and forming groups here and there, which just serve to break its continuity. Its bare sides, descending steep to the meadow, are received there by a piece of rich woody scenery, which adorns the banks of a rivulet. This mountain-skreen, tho it wants the beauty of variety itself, yet contrasts with several little hills; which skreen the meadow on the opposite side, and are in general round

and detached, some of them bare, and others woody, with little recesses between them.

The remains of the abbey are considerable; and many of the parts picturesque. The east, and west windows of the great church are intire; and much of the walls. The situation of the town may be traced, but the whole is so intirely overgrown with wood, and choked with rubbish, that we could not trace the plan with any accuracy.

A judicious hand might make these ruins, and their invirons, a very pleasing scene. To clear away some of the rubbish, and some of the wood, is all the decoration which the abbey requires: and as it stands near one end of the long meadow just mentioned, a simple walk might be traced round the whole scene, in the form of an irregular ellipsis. The ruins, which might be considered as a focus, would be the principal object; and a little planting might hide, and discover them with great beauty, and contrast; exhibiting sometimes a *distinct view*, and sometimes one *at hand*; here the *whole*, and there some *distinguished part*.

The flatness of the meadow is perhaps rather a beauty. Beauty is derived from two
sources;

sources; from objects themselves, and from their contrast with other objects. In contrast even deformity may be one of these sources; and produce beauty, as discords in music, produce harmony. If however so extensive a flat, tho diversified with wood, should be found to hurt the eye, part of the meadow might with great ease be floated with a lake.

But the walk need not be confined to the meadow. In some places it might skirt along the slopes of the hills; in others it might climb them; and exhibit new scenes, of which the place is fruitful. One view it might exhibit from the higher grounds, which is lost, I believe, in the lower, and that is, of Crow-castle, or Dinas-bran; which stands upon a lofty summit, and assists the scene by the introduction of a distance.

The only thing, which disgusts the eye through this whole scenery, is the lumpishness of some of those hills, which are opposite to the *continued skreen*. In a scene of mere grandeur, a lumpish hill may heighten the idea*; but where beauty is meant to par-

* See remarks on Penmanmawr, p. 126.

ticipate,

ticipate, and especially where the objects are small, it disgusts. These hills however might be greatly improved by a little judicious *semi-planting*, which might be so contrived, as to vary the line, and take off much from the heaviness of the appearance. I have known some improvers adorn a lumpish hill by planting it *all over*. By this mode of planting they have gained little; transforming only a round hill into a round bush. The woody-hill, which screened Conway-castle was of this kind.

Having viewed *in idea* such beauties, as the scenery before us might receive from a little judicious art, we are hurt at seeing it *in reality* so exceedingly injured. The proprietor has just now taken it into his head to improve it. A large square pond is dug in front of the ruins. The rivulet, which glides and murmurs naturally under the mountain-screen, is here taught another lesson. It is directed to a flight of stone-steps, down which it is made to fall in a regular cascade, and enter the pond at right angles. The pond is adorned with Chinese railing, painted a lively green. A square walk is laid out between the rail and the

the water ; and a summer-house, tipped with a gilded ball, and stationed opposite the cascade, is just finished. All this however we can bear, because nothing is done, but what might be undone ; but if this man of taste should stretch his hand towards the ruin itself, in the same style of improvement, we should find it a difficult matter to repress indignation. In these remarks I am not personal ; for I know not even the name of the improver.



S E C T. XIII.

AS we left the vale of Crucis, we entered directly a valley of a different kind; but of it's kind the most interesting. It has no scenes of grandeur to boast. It's beauties, in a humbler style, are merely sylvan. It extends nearly two miles in length, with a proportional degree of breadth. It's sides are little more than easy swelling banks, variously broken. At the bottom runs the Dee, which gives it's name to the valley; and, tho not too important, is here a river of some consequence. A large river would be unsuitable to the scene. We want only a shallow stream to murmur among the rocks and stones, which compose it's channel.

All the other objects of this valley are as much in harmony, as the river. We saw nothing striking from one end of it to the other; no peculiar feature; nothing that could give it
form

form *in description*. It had no bold skreen; no flat extended meadow; no magnificent ruin: but was varied into so pleasing a combination of parts; the ground so beautifully thrown about; the little knolls, and vallies so diversified, and contrasted; the trees so happily interspersed; and the openings, and windings of the river displayed to such advantage; in a word, the whole formed into such a variety of pleasing, natural scenes, that we scrupled not to call this valley one of the most interesting we had seen.

The source of all it's beauty is the harmonious combination of it's parts. Composition is the life of scenery. It is not trees, it is not rocks, it is not varied ground, it is not altogether, that makes a beautiful scene. From the same pallet we may see a picturesque landscape; or a daubed canvas. The colours are the same in both; in the former only they are more artfully combined.

In composition alone — I mean picturesque composition — nature yields to art. Nature is full of fire, wildness, and imagination. She touches every object with spirit. Her general colouring, and her local hues, are exquisite. In composition only she fails. We speak how-
ever

ever in this matter like the fly on the column. Her plans are too immense for our confined optics. They include kingdoms, continents, and hemispheres; and may be as elegant, as they are incomprehensible. Could we take in the whole of her landscapes at one cast; could we view the Hyrcanian forest as a grove; the kingdom of Poland as a lawn; the coast of Norway as a piece of rocky scenery; and the Mediterranean as a lake; we might then discover a plan justly composed, and *perhaps* beautiful even in a painter's eye. But as we can view only detached parts, we must not wonder, if we seldom find in any of them *our confined ideas* of a whole. Sometimes however we do; as in the valley we are now admiring; in which nature has given us a succession of sylvan scenery, as correct in the whole, as it is elegant in it's parts.

The beauty of nature's scenes, like those of art, depends much also on the light, in which they are seen. The same landscape, which appears to advantage under a setting sun, may lose many a charming touch, and many a beautiful form, when seen through the haziness of a morning. Some capital part may require a deep shadow to give it force; which can only
be

be given by a strong light. Other passages again are softened by shade. Their features may be too strong to endure a blaze of light. But *this* valley, I should imagine, like some bodies, that will bear all climates, has a constitutional strength, which no mode of atmosphere can injure.

If this valley were added to the vale, in which the ruin of Abbey-Crucis stands, and united with it in one plan, it would form a most pleasing and varied continuity of scene. From views of grandeur we might insensibly glide into a path of retirement :

fallentis femita vitæ,

where groves, and rivulets draw the mind to meditation, and inforce wisdom more effectually than books, and pulpits.

In the valley of the Dee very little improvement would be necessary. There will always be a rudeness in the works of nature. A *polished gem* she never produces. In the vastness of her designs the minutiae of finishing is overlooked. Man's microscopic eye requires more exactness. A little rubbish, and underwood might be cleared away ; a few openings might have a good effect ; and here and there,
a proper

a proper object, if it were truly sylvan, might appear to advantage : but a path could hardly be conducted better, than the road in which we pass through it. It winds regularly along the slope of one of the skreens, and could only be improved by a little variation. As the space is large, it might branch out in other directions ; climbing sometimes to the top, and sometimes descending to the bottom. In it's natural rudeness however, the whole scene has so many innate charms, that the traveller, in passing through it, may be satisfied with it, as it is ; and has only to fear lest some thriftless hand may despoil it of it's beauties.



THE town of Llangollen (or Clangothlin, as it is pronounced,) lies at the end of this valley. It is a place of no consequence; but pleasantly seated on the banks of the Dee. Some of the hills, which surround it, are woody, and others smooth. The bridge is esteemed among the curiosities of Wales. It is founded on a rock, is an ancient structure, ornamented with large buttresses; and is a picturesque object. The bed of the river, in this part, does not consist of detached stones, and fragments, as the beds of mountain-rivers commonly do; but is a continued surface of solid rock, variously broken, or rather channelled by the rapidity of the stream. These rocky channels give the bed of the river a peculiar form; and the water, which is cast in these molds, a peculiar mode of agitation. But the river, when we saw it, scarce occupied one third of it's bed.

From the church-yard at Llangollen we had a very amusing view of the Dee, and it's woody banks; but the perspective of the river from this stand is not very pleasing. This view therefore is rather what the painters call a *study* than a *composition*; and in this light many of the parts are admirable.

From the same stand we had a good view also of Crow-castle, which is no very picturesque object; but it breaks the line of the round hill, on which it stands. In itself however, at least upon the spot, it is a scene of grandeur; not occupying less space through it's whole circumference than three quarters of a mile. It has withstood the storms of many a century; and tho in the most exposed situation, preserves still *a form*; shewing here and there, the remnant of a tower, the fragment of a wall, and other vestiges, from which it's ancient prowess may be traced. There is a meagre spring within it's precincts; but this is always dry before the end of summer; and reservoirs, which were it's chief supply, must have been a very precarious one. What could make a place so ill supplied with water, worth the trouble of fortifying so strongly, does not appear. From the situation of many of the Welsh castles, we are led to believe them of
three

three kinds — such as were the residence of chiefs — the defence of passes — or temporary places of refuge for the country in time of alarm. These latter were commonly seated on lofty mountains, and were of immense size. We have already seen one of them on Penman-mawr *; and it is probable Dinas Bran might have been another.

Before we left Llangollen, we could have wished our time had permitted us to visit the lake of Bala, about fifteen miles to the west of it; which is said to be the most beautiful sheet of water in Wales. It is surrounded by wooded hills, and fringed banks, which are reflected from a mirror of the purest water. The lake of Bala is the source of the river Dee; on the banks of which, near its exit from the lake, in ancient times, prince Arthur was fostered by good old Timon, whose dwelling was

————— full low in valley green,
Under the foot of Auran, mossy hoar;
From whence the Dee, as purest silver clean;
His tumbling billows rolls with gentle roar.

* See page 129.

At present however, the good people of Bala, instead of fostering princes, foster flocks of sheep; and spin a kind of fine yarn, of which they make the softest, and pleafantest stockens. They who wear their winter-stockens for shew, must be content to submit to the more rigid texture of cotton or worsted; but they who wear them for comfort, especially people in years, may get them of the best kind, from the good folks of Bala.

Besides the lake of Bala, we should have been glad to have seen some other parts of Merionethshire, most of which is said to afford fine landscape; particularly the vale of Fefiniog, which is more celebrated than any other scene in Wales. In this county also stands the famous mountain of Cader Idris.

From Llangollen we pursued our rout to Chirk-castle, along a noble natural terrace, which overlooks the winding of the Dee, and it's opposite banks.

The situation of Chirk-castle, which belongs to Mr. Myddelton, does not seem the most eligible. As you approach, there is a rudeness, and nakedness about it, without any of
those

those *grand parts* of nature, which compensate the want of *beauty*. Behind the house hangs a wood; but it does not appear as we approach. The general air of the house is magnificent, from its round towers, and elevated situation; but on a nearer survey it appears regular and formal *without*; and *within* detached, incumbered, and inconvenient. The rooms form the sides of a large square; the angles of which are adorned with round towers. It stands in a park; which may be beautiful, when some new plantations have attained their growth. The garden is laid out in taste; and contains some pleasing scenery, particularly about the green-house*.

A few miles from Chirk-castle stands Winstay, a rival mansion; the seat of sir W. W. Wynne. From a distant view, which was all we had of it, it seems to enjoy a much more advantageous situation, than Chirk-castle; standing on the banks of the Dee, and overlooking a great profusion of woody scenery; with Chirk-castle as a principal object.

* The reader will remember, that this was written above 30 years ago.

These were the last places we visited in Wales; and here we took a final leave of the Dee, after having had three or four very agreeable interviews with it. We saw it first, in all its glory, at Chester; where it introduces its waters to the sea. We found it afterwards in the form of a pure, pastoral stream, in the valley we had just past, to which it gives its name. This idea however is lost at Llangollen, where it got among grander objects, and took a more romantic cast. — Its vague course gives it all this variety. When it leaves the lake of Bala, it runs almost due east about thirty miles, and then takes a sudden turn to the north; in which direction it continues, till it arrive at Chester. From thence it bends towards the west in its course to the sea; so that it forms a bow, to which a line drawn from the lake of Bala to Air-point would make the string. But tho when we saw it in the middle of June, it was every where a mild, and at loudest, but a murmuring stream, it is notwithstanding, in its furious moods, uncommonly turbulent. Receiving vast and sudden

den supplies from the mountains, into a channel naturally precipitate, it is immediately raised ; and in it's impetuosity overturns every thing it meets. Very different is the character of the Conway. It too receives great and sudden supplies ; but having a more horizontal channel, it passes quietly, and gently, through the country, in it's course to the sea.



S E C T. XV.

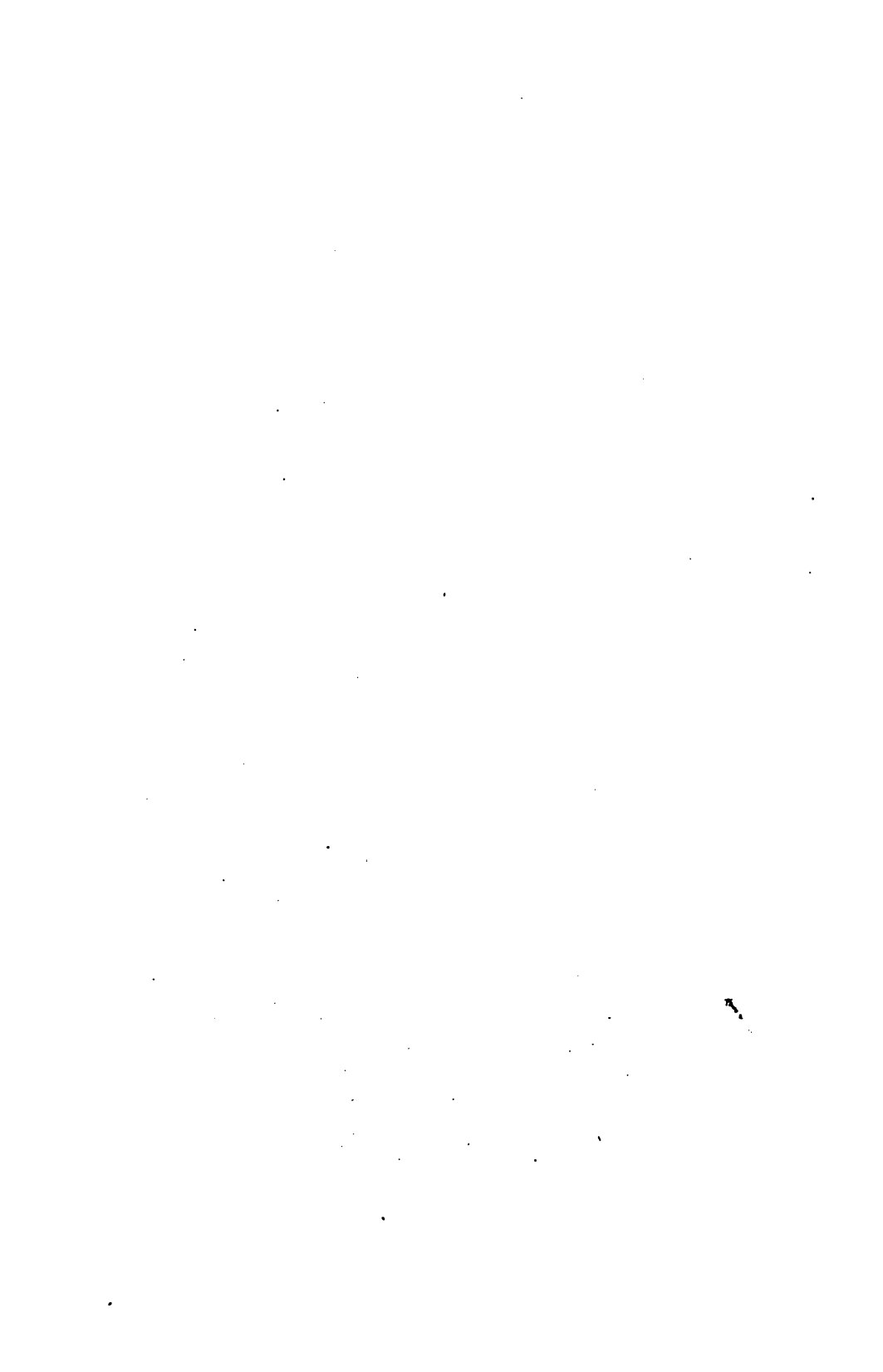
WE now entered Shropshire by Oswestry; from which town to Shrewsbury the country is so flat, and sandy, that we scarce met a single object to engage our attention.

The many marks of antiquity about Shrewsbury give it a venerable appearance. Its situation is singular. The Severn having performed a devious course through Montgomeryshire, and having now collected abundant supplies, and some of them from rivers of name, enters Shropshire with a full stream. About the middle of the county it meets a rocky eminence, which it forms into a peninsula. On the isthmus rises an eminence still higher. The former eminence was chosen for the situation of a *town*: the latter offered itself naturally for the site of a *castle*. Which took the first possession — which was the principal, and which the appendage, tradition

dition leaves dubious. Both were admirably chosen. This was the origin of Shrewsbury, which received its name from its situation. Shrewsbury is the corruption of an old Saxon word, which signifies *a bushy hill*. In former times therefore, it is probable the castle, and towers of Shrewsbury would appear to better effect rising from a woody hill, with the river circling beneath, than they do now, when the hill is ungarnished: for as a town consists necessarily of many uniform parts, it appears to most advantage, when some of those parts are judiciously skreened.

Cæsar's description of a town in Gaul, exactly suits Shrewsbury. "Flumen, ut circino circumductum, pæna totum oppidum cingit." You enter Shrewsbury by one bridge, and leave it by another, over the same river. The first is a grand, old structure, with a noble gate; the latter is modern. — The walls about the town are pleasant, and amusing. Indeed they could hardly be otherwise in the neighbourhood of such a river as the Severn.

On a plain, about three miles from the town, was fought that celebrated battle, between Henry IV. and Hotspur, which the drama hath made more famous, than either history,
or





or tradition. The most noted action of that day, was Falstaff's fighting a full hour by Shrewsbury-clock with Percy, after he had been killed. The scene of this battle is still shewn by the name of Battle-field.

From Shrewsbury to Wenlock, the country becomes more hilly. The Wrekin bore us company, on the left, through most of the way. The appearance of this mountain is rather singular. It is of a round, uniform shape, rising in a country not indeed flat ; but very little elevated.

The common toast of this country, is a *health round the Wrekin* : and the insularity of the mountain at once turns the *health* into a wish of universal benevolence. A *health round Snowdon* would be confined. That mountain crannies out so widely, and takes so many longitudinal, and latitudinal excursions, that it is hard to determine it's environs : and a person might be twenty miles from it's summit, and yet his situation in some appendage of the mountain, might be so ambiguous, as to leave it in doubt, whether he came properly within the sphere of the wish. But a *health round*

round the Wrekin is subject to no ambiguity. It is to be hoped only that the good people of Shropshire do not mean to confine their benevolent wish to their own county.

Tho this mountain is a detached object, it adds beauty to the scene; at least in a country, which is barren of scenery. It's surface was pleasantly tinged when we saw it, with a varietry of hues, formed by pasturage, fallows, wood, and cultivation, all melted together, by distance, into one rich mass. As the year advanced, all these views would change, and form a new assemblage of colouring. The pasture would become burnt, the corn yellow; and the wood tinged with it's autumnal hue. It might be more beautiful under these circumstances; or it might be more discordant. Nothing is more transient, and uncertain, than the vegetable tints of nature.

It is recorded of the elder Charles, that the side of a cultivated hill was an object, at which he always expressed disgust. He would say, it was like a beggar-woman's petticoat, patched with various clouts of yellow, green, and red. The observation is certainly just; and marks the royal observer's taste, which indeed was never questioned. But it must be supposed,
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the king spoke of a hill only when it is seen too near the eye. At a proper distance, when all this patchwork is blended together; when the harsh edges of discordant hues disappear, and all is harmonized into one uniform, tho varied surface, it may still be beautiful. Whoever has observed the operation of cleaning a painter's-pallet, may have an easy illustration of this distinction. When the colours are ranged in order, reds, greens, and blues, by the side of each other, nothing can be more inharmonious. But after the day's duty, when the refuse is scraped together into the colour-pot, you often see, on blending the mass together, the most harmonious tints, reds, blues, and yellows, not perfectly mixed, but broken, melting into each other, marbled, and contrasted perhaps with some dingy nameless colour, which is produced, in those parts where a perfect mixture of all the colours has taken place. The production of such an effect is like striking the cords of musical instruments; you have agreeable tones, but no composition.

Besides these tints on the sides of mountains, which arise from natural hues, we often other tints arising from different modifications of the air; and other causes, perhaps

kr

known. These are local and uncommon. Among the mountains and lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, we had frequent opportunities of observing them.

With regard to the form of the Wrekin, in some positions it appears almost the regular section of a globe: but it generally takes a form more varied; and in some views it is a continuous ridge. Its greatest extent stretches along the Severn; where, at its foot, stand the ruins of Bildwas-abbey. We did not see them, as we were informed they were heavy, and unpicturesque. But I should think they must be very bad, if they cannot form a scene; with such a river in front; and such a hill for a back-ground.

In the middle of the road we took notice of an oak of singular beauty, and dimensions, known by the name of the *Lady-oak*. The road is widened around it, and it is left at full liberty to extend its shade, and shelter, to all travellers. A circumstance of this kind on a road, besides its use, has so beautiful an effect, that it is a pity we do not oftener find it.

The only remarkable piece of scenery we met in our way to Wenlock, was a lofty bank, known by the name of Wenlock-edge.

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We saw it at a distance, running like a long, black-ridge, covered with wood, athwart the country. As we approached, the road being every where hid with thickets, it appeared matter of wonder, how a passage could be contrived to *ascend* it, for it was plainly too continuous to *evade*. When we arrived on the spot, we found a winding road cut through it. This work has been effected with great labour, and is steep, as may be imagined; but not very incommodious. When we had attained the summit, we had no descent on the other side; this long ridge being the slope only of one of those grand, natural terraces, by which one tract of country sometimes descends into another.







S E C T. XVI.

AT Wenlock we were entertained with the ruins of an abbey. The scenery around it is less inviting, than we commonly find in the situation of those monastic dwellings. It stands, as abbeyes often do, on the banks of a rivulet; but these banks have nothing very interesting about them. All their furniture is gone.

We found fault with Abbey-Crucis for being too much incumbered. The ruins of Wenlock-abbey offend from being too detached. They are not only unadorned with scenery; but they stand naked, and staring in three parts, without any connection, either of wood, or ruin, as if distributed into three lots, and exposed to sale. In their present state therefore we consider them only as *studies*: if they had been *connected with each*

other by fragments of old walls : and *connected with the ground* by a few heaps of rubbish ; and a little adorned with wood, we should have considered them in a higher stile, and looked at them as *pictures*.

But it may be said, a ruin *should be* desolate. — It is true : but we make a distinction. It should be *desolated by art* ; not by *nature*. Nature claims it as her own ; and all nature's productions may flourish around it. With trees particularly, uncut, and unmutilated, it may be adorned with great profusion, without injuring the idea of desolation.

It is merely however in a *picturesque light* that I can call the ruins of Wenlock-abbey *unconnected*. In an *architectural view*, they all belong to the great church of the monastery, the plan of which may easily be traced. Part of the south aisle, and its end-windows are left ; a fragment of the north aisle, and a fragment of the west. At Abbey-Crucis we had a greater mass of external ruins, but here is more of the inside work ; which is often very beautiful ; and in this ruin particularly, all of it being constructed in the purest Gothic. There are a few other remains ; part of which are supposed to have been cloisters ; but no-
thing

thing of any considerable extent, except these three fragments.

In the neighbourhood of Wenlock happened, not many weeks before we were there, (May 1773,) a remarkable *flip*, as it was called, on the banks of the Severn, between Colebroke-dale, and Buildway-bridge, which greatly alarmed the whole country. A piece of high ground, containing at least twenty acres, gave way; and rushing into the channel of the Severn, pushed it forward; leaving behind many horrid chasms, some of them thirty feet wide. A house standing on the ground, was moved many yards from its station; and the inhabitants had but just time to escape. Indeed they had been swallowed up, if they had not fortunately fled in a right direction. A turnpike road was removed; and thrown up edge-ways; and the Severn, taking a new course, gave room for future litigation by this strange removal of property. Many thought this great convulsion was owing to an earthquake, as it was accompanied with a noise; but it seems to have been more local, than earthquakes generally are.

From Wenlock to Bridgenorth the country is hilly and woody. The falling tower of Bridgnorth makes an odd appearance, as we approach it. We had heard much of the views from the castle-hill. They consist of the windings of the Severn; and the meadows along its banks. But there is nothing remarkably beautiful in the objects; and something very disagreeable in the *composition* of them. — At the siege of this castle by Henry II. a singular piece of loyalty is recorded. Henry pressing the siege with vigour, had advanced too near the walls. Hubert de St. Clare, one of his generals, stood by his side; and perceiving an archer from the tower taking aim at the king, who was conspicuous by a golden crown round his helmet, had just time to interpose between him, and fate: he received the arrow in his breast, and dropped dead at the king's feet. — To endeavour to rescue a friend in battle, where the chance may be equal, is a slight effort, in comparison with this, where a certain blow is received, without any idea of self-defence. — The king, as may be supposed, was overwhelmed

med with grief; and had no way left
showing his gratitude, but by taking St.
e's infant daughter under his protection
giving her a princely education; and
ining for her an honourable match.



S E C T. XVII.

ON leaving Bridgenorth, we found the country wild, sandy, and heathy. A little above Pool-hall, we had a beautiful distance, seen obliquely, of the windings of the Severn, which we easily traced, tho the river itself was frequently concealed. The same view appeared afterwards in front.

A little beyond the three-shive stone, we had another very picturesque distance on the right, over a woody bottom; which likewise opened again, still more beautiful and extensive, as we ascended the hill, before we reached the turnpike. Indeed the whole road is a noble terrace, affording views on every side.

The church at Kidderminster is a good object. From hence the road becomes close and woody. The views break out again towards Westwood, the seat of sir Herbert Packington, where we had a good distance. At this house

Mr.

Mr. Addison is supposed to have collected his materials, and drawn his inimitable portrait of Sir Roger de Coverly.

Having passed the sweet groves of Omberley, we got again into a flat country; where the only distance we saw, was now and then an interrupted view of the Malvern hills, on the right.

Worcester is one of the neatest, and most beautiful towns in England. The whole place has an air of elegance. The town-house makes a good appearance, as we passed it; but the profusion of its ornaments, I fear, would not bear a close inspection. The great church is a beautiful Gothic pile, and deserves more admiration than it generally finds. The tower is elegantly adorned. As a whole, it should have been loftier; but it was once probably only the support of a spire, if a spire was ever a Gothic ornament. All the other proportions of the church are pleasing; the pillars and ornaments are light and airy.

The good bishop Hough's monument, by Rubiliac, is a masterly work. The figure of the bishop, clasping his hands, and looking
up,

up, in a strong act of faith, deserves any praise. I have no idea of more in sculpture. An inanimated form, however fair, is a meagre effort of art; compared with a figure, characterized like this. The lines of an elegant human body are highly beautiful; but still they affect the *eye* only: when character, and expression are added, they affect the *soul**. The bishop lies in his full episcopal habit; and yet, (such is the exquisite touch of the master,) his marble robes fit as light, and easy upon him, as his lawn used to do. If it were not a kind of *Sutorian* remark†, I should observe, that his heavy shoe is the only part of his dress, which is exceptionable. The figure of Religion is a good figure; but very inferior to that of the bishop; and is besides ill-balanced.

The library is worth seeing. It is a circular room, about sixty feet in diameter, and was formerly the chapter-house. The roof is supported by a single pillar in the middle: but we sometimes see better proportioned rooms of this kind adjoining to cathedrals.

* See this observation carried farther in the Western tour, p.

† The story of Apelles and the cobbler is well known.

As we leave Worcester we have a good retrospect of it from the hill about a mile beyond it: we then enter the flat country again.

A little short of *Pershore* an extensive view opens in front. One scene rises behind another; and Pershore church appears beautiful among the woods. The whole is set off by a very remote distance.

From Pershore we entered the vale of Eversham. The *Abbot's-tower* is a piece of unrivalled architecture of its kind. It was finished just before the dissolution took place; and having escaped all the injuries, and violence of the succeeding times, it still exhibits a beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture, in its latest period.

S E C T. XVIII.

THE vale of Everſham is among the moſt
extenſive vales in England. It runs
along the banks of the Avon from Tewksbury
in Glouceſterſhire, to Stratford in Warwick-
ſhire. It is as rich alſo as it is extenſive. But
it is rich in the farmer's eye, not in the
painter's. I ſcarce remember meeting a more
unpiſtureſque tract of country. As it is *called*
a vale, and by that circumſtance reminds us of
the vale of Cluydd, and other vales, which
are confined by noble limits, and ſpread with a
varied ſurface, the diſappointment was the
greater. The vale of Everſham, in a piſtureſque
light, is little more, than an immenſe flat corn-
field; and we ſaw nothing in it but uniform
ſtreaks of growing corn of different colours,
and running in different directions. When it
becomes a diſtance at Broadway-hill, and all
regularity is removed, it preſents the beauty of
other extenſive ſcenes of cultivation.

Having

Having crossed the vale of Eversham, we rose into a hilly country; but the hills are smooth, and naked. The imagination by planting, may form them into beautiful scenes: but unadorned, they are dreary. They abound however with sheep-walks; and often entertain the eye with beautiful groups.

As we approach Chapel-house, we have a good flat distance. On the left, we pass lord Shrewsbury's; and soon after, a woody dip, on the right, accompanies us almost to Woodstock. In some places Blenheim-castle, partly concealed in woods, appearing over the trees, gives grandeur to the scene.

As we leave Woodstock towards Oxford, the plain at Campsfield, and the distance beyond it, are well balanced; and set off each other. The approach to Oxford, on this side, is no way interesting*.

Between Oxford and Bensington we found little that was pleasing. Beyond that town, the road is hilly, and interspersed with copses, which sometimes produce a good effect.

* See this country more described in Observations on the lakes of Cumberland, &c.

As we leave Nettle-bed, the common, the woods beyond it, and the distance beyond that, make a pleasing assemblage. The road from thence winds agreeably among woody hills, as it did when we left Bensington.

The first view of Henly, lying among folding hills, is picturesque; and the approach to it, through a noble vista, along a valley near two miles in length, has, from it's regularity, the beauty at least of *propriety* to recommend it. The tower of the church fronts the vista; and gives still farther intimation, that we are approaching a town. The back-ground is composed of woody hills. A vista of this kind at the entrance of a town, is one of those connecting circumstances, which draws the eye gradually from one mode of object to another; and prevents abruptness. The two objects united here, are a town, and a country. A vista partaking both of the regularity of the one; and of the natural simplicity of the other, is a good connecting link. Where objects indeed are small, an introduction is unnecessary. A house, tho a formal object, if it be not superb, may stand in the midst of rural ideas. But when the eye is to dwell long on a large object, as on a town, or
pala

palace, a connecting tye is natural. Indeed nature generally introduces a change of objects in this gradual way ; joining one country to another, with some circumstances, which participate of both.

About the 29th stone, the variety of open ground, copses, and distances on the right, are amusing.

Near the 22d stone, the high trees at the end of the road, present a good group ; but beauties of this kind scarce deserve mentioning. Among all the beauties of nature, nothing is so transient as a tree, which is liable to so many accidents. A scene therefore, which depends merely on a few trees, is not worth recording.

From hence we struck over Hounslow-heath to Kingston, where we entered Surrey.

June 19th, 1773.

THE END.



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